

the devil and the deep blue sea

by
robbie pickering

Inspired by the personal memoirs of
Henry Hertzell Jr.

contact:

joan scott and marti blumenthal
ampersand management
(310) 274-7707
447 s. robertson blvd. suite 103
beverly hills, ca 90211

The following is based on a true story...

... not counting the made-up parts.

EXT. OCEAN - DAY

Driftwood. Rope. Trash. Floating on the surface of a limitless expanse of cold ocean blue.

GIRL'S VOICE (V.O.)
People always start stories with
some dickweed phrase like 'legend
has it.' You ever notice that?

SUPER: SOMEWHERE IN THE ATLANTIC, SEVERAL YEARS AGO

A SAILOR peers over the side of a GIGANTIC PORTUGUESE WHALING SHIP. Whatever is in the water, it is something man-made. Possibly-

PORtUGUESE SAILOR
(in Portuguese)
A raft?

EXT. OCEAN - MOMENTS LATER

A PLASTIC BAG is tied to one of the demolished raft's slats. The Portuguese Sailor's rough hand grabs the bag.

GIRL'S VOICE (V.O.)
Only, most true stories don't
start where you expect 'em to.

Inside the bag is a journal. He turns to the first page--

"IF FOUND, I'M PROBABLY SCREWED. PLEASE RETURN TO 234 RANSOM LANE, NEW ORLEANS LOUISIANA. THANKS A TON, DAVID."

FADE TO BLACK.

GIRL'S VOICE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
They usually start on some regular
day. With some regular person.
Take Henry Hertzell for example...

INT. HENRY'S CLOSET - MORNING

GIRL'S VOICE (V.O.)
Legend has it that Henry was about
as regular as dudes come.

HENRY HERTZEL (33) slips into a DRESS SHIRT, which he tucks into his UNDERWEAR. He puts on his BROWN SLACKS.

GIRL'S VOICE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Kind of a dildo if ya' ask me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He opens an old SHOE BOX to see that it's empty. He hears COUGHING coming from the BATHROOM.

HENRY

Cindy? Have you seen my penny loafers?

CINDY (O.S.)

(inside bathroom)

Yes. I hid them.

HENRY

Why?

CINDY (O.S.)

They're penny loafers.

HENRY

But...those were my good shoes.

CINDY (O.S.)

Did you see the sneakers I bought you? Those are awesome shoes.

Henry comes up with a pair of WILD SNEAKERS.

HENRY

But...they're magenta. I'm not supposed to wear magenta to work.

CINDY (O.S.)

I know. People are gonna love 'em.

Henry glances at his watch. No time to argue.

HENRY

Okay...I might be home late. You need me to pick up anything?

CINDY (O.S.)

Negative, sir. Just watch out for that girl when you come home.

HENRY

What girl?

CINDY (O.S.)

She's always rooting around in our garbage. I wanted to give her some food the other day, but--

HENRY

Don't give her food! She might have diseases.

CONTINUED: (2)

CINDY (O.S.)
 Jesus, you sound like my mom!
 She's not a racoon. If you see
 her, could you just try to help
 her out? For me? She seems like
 she needs it.

HENRY
 Okay. I'll try.

CINDY
 Promise?

HENRY
 Promise.

CINDY
 You swear too?

HENRY
 Yes I swear too.

CINDY (O.S.)
 Give a gal a kiss before you go?

A slight tapping on the door.

CINDY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 That's where my lips are gonna be.

HENRY
 O - Okay.

CINDY (O.S.)
 Synchronize? On three. One, two--

INSERT - We see Henry's lips and CINDY'S LIPS kiss the exact same spot on opposite sides of the door.

HENRY
 You're kind of crazy. You know that?

CINDY (O.S.)
 I'm not the one wearing magenta sneakers.

INT. HENRY'S KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

GIRL'S VOICE (V.O.)
 Yep. Henry was a seemingly average man...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Henry eyes a TRAVEL MAGAZINE laid out on the kitchen counter. Two STICK FIGURES are drawn on the beautiful beach. Over which is written - 'ME AND YOU?'

GIRL'S VOICE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
...living each day as it came to
him.

He writes 'MAYBE NEXT YEAR' on the page.

EXT. HENRY'S HOUSE - MORNING

GIRL'S VOICE (V.O.)
...and to him, this day was comin'
as normal as any other.

As Henry walks to his car he hears TAPPING. He looks up to see a SHEET OF PAPER against the bathroom window.

Written on it in thick black marker are the words -

'I'M ALWAYS LOVING YOU.'

As a smile spreads across his face...

GIRL'S VOICE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
But it wouldn't end like them
other days.

EXT. ROADSIDE - AFTERNOON

WHAM! A cute little JEEP slams full speed into a TREE.

The DRIVER'S HEAD smashes through the windshield. Blood splatters everywhere.

INT. HENRY'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Henry picks up his RINGING office phone.

HENRY
Hello?

As Henry's face slowly goes blank we...

FADE TO BLACK.

GIRL'S VOICE (V.O.)
Henry was destined for great
things, but right now all he was
worryin' about was getting through
tomorrow...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TITLE: 'THE DEVIL AND THE DEEP BLUE SEA'

MALE VOICE (V.O.)

When we lose a loved one like Cindy, we ask ourselves why God would choose to take such a unique and beautiful flower. We mustn't distract ourselves from this question and we must show Cindy the same warmth in death that she showed us while she was alive...

INT. FUNERAL PARLOR - DAY

A FUNERAL PARLOR SALESMAN sits behind a Mahogany desk.

SALESMAN

...which is why I am suggesting the Griefetex poly-alloy urn for her remains. It is a reasonably priced and durable vessel that can easily fit all of your storage and dispersal needs.

He slides a catalog gently to HENRY, dressed in all black. He sits next to JULIA (60s), also in black.

SALESMAN (CONT'D)

Now, did Cindy specify where her ashes are to be spread?

Henry stares in a daze down at his MAGENTA SNEAKERS.

JULIA

My daughter...she left that decision up to Henry in her will.

SALESMAN

Well, Henry - did you have any idea where you might be spreading those ashes?

Henry's eyes water. His hands tremble.

SALESMAN (CONT'D)

...any idea at all? Son?

Henry snaps himself out of it. Turns to the Salesman.

HENRY

Yeah (sniffle) I, um...I just - I just had a couple of questions.

CONTINUED:

SALESMAN

Anything.

HENRY

The urn - is it...is it
hermetically sealed?

SALESMAN

Excuse me?

HENRY

It would be nice if it were
hermetically sealed. To protect
from microorganisms.

SALESMAN

Microorganisms?

HENRY

You know...fungus. Things like
that. Better safe than sorry.

SALESMAN

Where exactly were you planning on
spreading the ashes again?

HENRY

A locking mechanism would also be
great. Yeah...a locking mechanism.

SALESMAN

Frankly, I think there are more
important things for you to be
worrying about right now, Mr.
Hertzel.

HENRY

Right. I thought you might have
some trouble...

Henry pulls out a piece of paper and slides it across the desk. It is a design for an INTRICATE URN.

HENRY (CONT'D)

...so I took the liberty of
drawing this up last night. Just a
jumping off point, really. Don't
worry. It's still your show.

Awkward silence from the salesman as we --

CUT TO:

INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Dozens of mourners mill around the spacious living room in black.

Henry nurses a glass of wine by A LONE OAK COLUMN that supports the entire house.

He stares at an inscription in the pole- 'HENRY + CINDY.'

From his POV, we see the BACKLIT SILHOUETTE OF A LAUGHING CINDY as she carves the inscription with one of his PROTRACTORS. A faint voice calls out, laughing...

CINDY (V.O.)

Oh, c'mon Henry!

Henry shields his eyes from the harsh lamp-light backlighting her, and she DISAPPEARS.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Um...Mister Hertzel?

He turns to see a MULLETED REDNECK and a PERUVIAN IMMIGRANT in cheap suits.

HENRY

Oh...hey...hey there.

MULLETED REDNECK

Me and Pele know we've jus' been workin' on the house renovation fer a month...and well, we feel like anything we'd say'd sound shitty. So we jus' thought we'd give ya' this instead...

He hands Henry a PLASTIC BAGGIE. Henry unwraps it, revealing a SMALL PIPE filled with some grade-A weed.

HENRY

This is um... marijuana?

MULLETED REDNECK

You need any help... usin' it?

HENRY

I think I'll be fine. Thanks alot--

MULLETED REDNECK

Retard.

HENRY

Excuse me?

CONTINUED:

PELE
That hees name. Retard.

HENRY
Oh right. Well, thanks... Retard.

CUT TO - A LARGE STEEL URN sitting on Henry's fireplace.

OLD MAN (O.S.)
Jiminy Christmas. That's one hell
of a vessel.

A PREACHER pours a JAPANESE MAN some wine while an OLD MAN marvels at the prodigious stainless steel urn.

PREACHER
Owner of the Alderwoods funeral
home told me Henry made it himself
when they couldn't meet his
specifications. Has a lock
mechanism and everything. Hot
damn.

JAPANESE MAN
That's just Henry. Always has to
be solving a problem.

OLD MAN
If by 'solving a problem', you
mean complete freakin' denial. And
didja get a loada those sneakers?!

JAPANESE MAN
Only Cindy coulda loved those.

PREACHER
It was like they lived in their
own little fantasy world. Y'know,
he designed this house and built
it for her...beautiful work.

They look around at their surroundings. The modernist
touches are offset by elegant mahogany ceilings.

PREACHER (CONT'D)
You ever hear how they met? She
was his skydiving instructor.

JAPANESE MAN
Cindy was a skydiving instructor?

PREACHER
Nope. She just posed as one so she
could meet him. He ends up piggy-
backing with her when they jump...

EXT. SKY - FANTASY

Henry clings to CINDY as they plummet through the sky.

PREACHER (V.O.)

At 20,000 feet ol' Henry asks her
when they're s'posed to pull the
ripchord. And she says -

PREACHER/CINDY

How the fuck should I know? This
is only my second time up here!

INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

JAPANESE MAN

You're allowed to say 'fuck'?

PREACHER

Depends on the situation, really.

Julia passes.

JULIA

Has anyone seen Henry?

EXT. HENRY'S HOUSE - LATER

Henry takes cover behind a WHITE CLAW BATHTUB amongst a pile of CONSTRUCTION RUBBLE from a RENOVATION taking place at the side of the elegant house.

He tries to work the weed pipe - clearly inexperienced.

HENRY

Darnit...SHIT!

He slams the pipe on the ground, laying his head in his hands. Sniffling.

HENRY (CONT'D)

(muffled)

...dammit...Cindy...

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)

Hey.

He looks up to see a FEMALE SILHOUETTE, backlit by the streetlight. For a moment it looks like Cindy, then--

The silhouette shifts in the light and the voice changes.

CONTINUED:

FEMALE VOICE (CONT'D)
 You alright? Mister?

It's A LANKY WHITE TRASH GIRL (15) in a Big Johnson shirt, with long purple hair and a necklace made of BOTTLE CAPS and bracelets made of PIPE CLEANERS.

HENRY
 Yeah...yeah, no (sniffle) I'm fine.

THE GIRL
 You sure?

HENRY
 Yes. No. I mean - you just - look like someone I know. Sorry.

THE GIRL
 She hot?

HENRY
 Excuse me?

THE GIRL
 The person you know. She got the goods?

HENRY
 I... I guess.

THE GIRL
 That's cool.

Henry picks up the weed pipe and examines it.

THE GIRL (CONT'D)
 About the pipe - you put yer finger over the hole. Then inhale and uncover the hole. It's pretty simple, really.

The Girl walks across the street and rolls an OLD TIRE to a JUNK LADEN CART. Henry's eyes go wide.

HENRY
 Hey. I know you. You're the--

THE GIRL
 The what?

HENRY
 Nothing. I've just - I've heard about you. That's all.

CONTINUED: (2)

THE GIRL
That bathtub yours?

HENRY
Um - well...we're renovating, and
my -- um -- my wife hates it, so--

THE GIRL
Well - Don't chuck it yet. I'll
be back fer it. Capeche?

The Girl starts to stroll off, then turns.

THE GIRL (CONT'D)
...and I dig yer sneakers, dude.
Magenta's the shit.

A warm smile spreads over Henry's face.

JULIA (O.S.)
Heennnnry? Henry, honey?

Henry hides the pipe.

JULIA (CONT'D)
Oh there you are! Come inside.
Everyone's worried sick about you.

She follows his eyes to the Girl pushing her cart.

JULIA (CONT'D)
Who's that? She looks boopy.

HENRY
She... likes my sneakers.

JULIA
So she is boopy. What'd she want?

HENRY
This bathtub.

JULIA
Hm...what for?

HENRY
Good question.

EXT. NEW ORLEANS - NIGHT

The Girl lugs her cart through the rough streets of a demolished New Orleans.

EXT. RUN-DOWN BARN - LATER

She pushes the Cart up to a RICKETY BARN and lets herself in. We hear a great deal of METAL CLANKING inside.

INT. SHITTY HOME - ENTRYWAY - MOMENTS LATER

A severely flood-damaged home. The carpet has been ripped out, walls are covered with mold. A sloppy DRUNK IN HIS UNDERWEAR snores on the couch. The Girl looks at him for a second, then sighs.

INT. SHITTY HOME - BEDROOM

She fetches a DIRTY BLANKET AND PILLOW from the Man's bedroom.

INT. SHITTY HOME - ENTRYWAY

She covers him with the blanket. Lifts his head up for the pillow, but he PUSHES HER AWAY.

THE MAN
(pushing her away)
FUCKOFFFME...SHIT...

She drops the pillow, hangs her head.

She spots a HALF EMPTY bottle of cheap Tequila and a box of LUCKY CHARMS cereal on the floor, sadly picks them up.

CUT TO:

INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - SIMULTANEOUS

At least FIFTEEN CROCK POTS clutter Henry's counter. Everyone left a long time ago.

INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - FOYER- MOMENTS LATER

Henry stuffs CINDY'S URN high up on a CLOSET SHELF, completely out of sight, and shuts the door.

CUT TO:

INT. SHITTY HOME - THE GIRL'S ROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

The walls in the Girl's room are covered with beautiful PICTURES OF THE OCEAN torn out of various magazines.

CUT TO:

INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM

Henry's dresser is littered with framed PICTURES of Henry and Cindy. In every one of them, her hair is a different color and they are in a new locale - a wedding, an office party, a baseball game. Henry's clothes are always the same. Same wire-framed coke-bottle glasses too.

CUT TO:

INT. SHITTY HOME - THE GIRL'S ROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

The Girl drinks the rest of the Tequila and scoops handfuls of Lucky Charms as she makes pencil-revisions to some kind of OLD BLUEPRINT.

CUT TO:

INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

Henry, now in pajamas, sits in bed. He looks over to a PILE OF CINDY'S UNFOLDED LAUNDRY sitting in to his right.

Cute MULTI-COLORED SOCKS, a small pink shirt, inside-out panties.

He SNAPS HIMSELF OUT OF HIS DAZE, switches on the TV. A late-night episode of 'Murder She Wrote' plays. Angela Lansbury's voice drones on in the background...

...but Henry's eyes drift back to that PILE OF CINDY'S LAUNDRY. And her INDENTATION - still next to him in bed.

Like she's still there.

HENRY

God...DAMMIT!

He sweeps everything off his bedside table, flings his clock radio across the room. The impact switches the radio on. Karen Carpenter's sugary voice drones over the tinny little speakers. We've Only Just Begun indeed.

After a moment, he notices his BLUEPRINT TUBES sitting beside the bed. He wipes his snot, picks them up...

EXT. DOWNTOWN - DAWN

A grapefruit sun rises over downtown New Orleans.

INT. SUZUKI-SHANJI - ARCHITECTURE FIRM

ANGIE (30s), opens a CORNER OFFICE DOOR to reveal - Henry at his desk, pouring over blueprints.

HENRY

Howdy.

Angie yelps in shock, spilling her mocha. The office is a warzone - blueprints everywhere, diagrams on the wall...

ANGIE

Henry? How long have you been here?

HENRY

About...eight and a half hours.
Thought I'd get a jump on the day.
(off her silence)
Something wrong?

INT. AKIO'S PALATIAL OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

The office of AKIO SUZUKI (40s). We recognize him as the Japanese Man from the funeral.

HENRY

Listen Mr. Suzuki, I had a little chat with Angie, and she seems to be under the impression that I've been taken off the Marina Project.
(chuckles)
Which is ludicrous considering we're just starting construction.

AKIO

Henry. There is an old Japanese proverb... "The wounded goldfish cannot tend to its gills if it seeks solace in the diversion of the pleasant seaweed garden." Do you have any idea what that means?

HENRY

I'm - the goldfish?

CONTINUED:

AKIO

The healthiest thing you can do right now is to forget all the real-life problems that distract from the healing process.

HENRY

But...I want to work.

AKIO

Ahhh. But you need to grieve. Now I don't want to see you back here for at least another week. Trust me...you'll be just fine.

INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - ENTRYWAY - DAY

Henry SLAMS the front door and tears off his tie.

INT./EXT. HENRY'S HOUSE - RENOVATED ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Retard and Pele work on the half-renovated room. Henry shuffles in.

RETARD

Oh...hey there boss man. Say - there's a shitload a' grub in the kitchen and we was jus' gonna ask, y'know...

HENRY

Take it all.

(awkward beat)

You guys wouldn't happen to need any - help? Would you?

RETARD

Naw dude...thas alri--

Retard looks up at a silently pleading Henry. Gets the picture.

RETARD (CONT'D)

-- I mean, um...if you really wanna--

PELE

Thas okay. Boss. We doing fines. Really. We handle it.

Pele shoots Retard a death look. The DOORBELL RINGS.

EXT./INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - ENTRYWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Henry opens the front door to reveal a UPS GUY holding an ODDLY SHAPED OVERSIZED PACKAGE.

Henry looks at the label on the package - addressed to 'CINDY HERTZEL'.

INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - RENOVATED ROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

PELE

Is you crazy?! He losing it
bigtime and jou want him help us?!

RETARD

Dammit Pele - can'tcha try to be a
little more understanding? 'sides -
this is the first damn job we've
had in months. Don' fuck it up!

INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - ENTRYWAY

Henry shoves the ODD PACKAGE deep in the bowels of the SAME CLOSET where he put the Urn. He slams the door.

JULIA (V.O.)

(over the phone)
Henry? Are you there?

INT. HENRY'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

JULIA (V.O.)

I just - I was wondering if you're
getting that obituary done like
you promised.

A BLANK OBITUARY FORM sits next to a pile of other unfinished papers.

JULIA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

And I also wanted to see if you
were up for having dinner - maybe.

Henry opens the refrigerator and looks in at the dozens of crock pots filled with 'sympathy food'. He closes it.

JULIA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I just thought you might be -
lonely.

INT. CINDY'S BEDROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

Julia sits in Cindy's bedroom alone.

JULIA

Call me? Okay.

She hangs up the phone and stares blankly at a picture of a lanky teenage Cindy and her together.

The TEENAGE CINDY bears an uncanny resemblance to The Girl... right down to the crazy jewelry.

INT. 7-11 - CONTINUOUS

Henry slides a TV Dinner across to a 7-11 CLERK and pays. He looks up at the STORE TV. *Murder She Wrote* is playing.

HENRY

Oh, wow. *Murder She Wrote*. My wife and I love trying to solve the mystery. How about you?

CLERK

S - sure.

HENRY

Say - you mind if I zap this in your microwave and watch it here?

CLERK

Um...we're not - really allowed to let people do that. Sorry.

HENRY

Oh. Yeah - okay -

CLERK

It's just kinda - weird for the other customers.

Henry looks behind him to a line of whispering customers.

CLERK (CONT'D)

Why don't you call your wife?
Maybe she could tape it for you.

INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - LATER

Henry eats his microwave dinner in bed and stares at a BLANK TELEVISION SCREEN. Alone.

CONTINUED:

Once again trying to keep his eyes off that PILE OF LAUNDRY.

Suddenly he hears a *Squeaking* sound from outside...

He puts down his food and creeps to the window to see--

-- The Girl. Using a CAR JACK to load the BATHTUB onto her cart.

HENRY
(mouth full)
Huh. I'll be damned.

EXT. HENRY'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Squeeeeak. The Girl wheels her rickety cart slowly down the street until it hits a bump and stops completely.

HENRY (O.S.)
Hey!

THE GIRL
JESUS! Don' sneak up on me like that!

HENRY
Sorry. It's me from the other night. Looks like you're the one who could use a little help now.

THE GIRL
No thanks man. I don't need--

But before she can say anymore, he squats down and reinforces the cart's bad wheel with a SCREWDRIVER.

HENRY
It's no problem. Really. You just need some wheel stabilization.
G'head. Push.

The Girl pushes the repaired cart. Henry notices a PURPLE BRUISE peeking out of her sweatshirt.

THE GIRL
Huh. Shit. That is better. See ya.

HENRY
Wait! I was hoping you could tell me, you know, why you collect all this junk... maybe I could help...

CONTINUED:

THE GIRL

Why?

HENRY

Why what?

THE GIRL

Why you wanna help me?

HENRY

I just, well - I kind of -
promised someone that I would.

THE GIRL

Promised who?

HENRY

Someone special. It - it doesn't
matter.

THE GIRL

Riiight. You're one a' those
pervs likes to touch twelve year
old girls, aren'tcha? Don't guys
like you hafta put a sign on your
lawn?

HENRY

No!

THE GIRL

'No' you don't like twelve year
olds or 'no' pervs like you don't
have to put signs on your lawn?

HENRY

No - both... I mean - Look, I
don't even know your name.

THE GIRL

Why do you need ta know my name?

HENRY

It would just be nice to have
something to call you.

THE GIRL

'kay. How's... MacGyver?

HENRY

I'm not calling you MacGyver!

THE GIRL

Look dude. Last night you needed
help, and I gave it to ya'.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

THE GIRL (CONT'D)
 But it don't mean we're BFF and it
 sure as shit don't mean I need yer
 help. So whatever yer problem is,
 I wish ya' luck - really, but I
 got my own shit ta deal with, so
 jus' leave me out of it. Okay?

Henry watches her wheel slowly under the streetlights.

INT. HENRY'S KITCHEN - LATER

Henry at the kitchen table with the OBITUARY FORM.

Who knows how long he's been sitting here, PARALYZED by
 the prospect of writing anything. His hand TREMBLES.

...then he flips it over and begins jotting the contents
 of The Girl's Cart. LAWNMOWER ENGINE, TABLE, ETC.

INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

Virgin rays of sunlight hit Henry's face as he wakes to
 see Pele chomping ASPARAGUS from one of the CROCK POTS.

PELE
 (mouth full)
 Buenosdiasboss.

Retard is looking over Henry's LIST.

RETARD
 Hey there Henry, man. I's just
 curious - what's this list about?
 If yer at liberty to divulge.

HENRY
 It's stupid.

RETARD
 Try me, dude.

HENRY
 It's... this girl. I think that
 she's building something.

Henry rises and makes himself coffee and toast.

RETARD
 What's her name?

HENRY
 She won't tell. She thinks I'm a
 pervert.

CONTINUED:

RETARD
But pervs got moustaches.

HENRY
I could've shaved it.

RETARD
My cousin Dingle's a perv. He'd never shave his 'stache. Never.

PELE
She loco anyway man. She make lots noise, keep my womans up at night.

HENRY
You - you know her?

PELE
The nina with cart? She live next door to Pele.

DING! Toast's ready.

INT. PELE'S HOUSE - DAY

CRASH! A cheap ceramic mini-statue of Michaelangelo's David smashes against the wall inches from Pele's head.

PELE
DIOS FUCK WOMAN!!!

Pele's plump wife MARGARITA howls obscenities at Pele as he leads Henry and Retard into the house.

RETARD
Pele's senorita hates the crap out of 'im.

HENRY
Why is that?

As if on cue, Pele's sons LALO (10) and JESUS (8) crash through the room squirting KETCHUP at each other.

RETARD
Dude leaves 'er couped up in this joint wit' those two hellraisers all day...Guess it's hard ta spend quality time with tha family when yer so damn busy.

INT. PELE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN

Pele peels a cardboard cutout of a Peruvian Santa Claus off a grimey kitchen window and motions outside.

About fifty feet away lies an OLD DECREPIT BARN.

PELE

This is the barn where she work.
Belong to her borachon father.

RETARD

Bora-what?

HENRY

Borachon. It means alcoholic.

CREEAAK! Outside, the Girl exits the barn with her cart.

PELE

She go out every night. She not be
back for six...maybe seven hours.

HENRY

I - I should go over there.

PELE

WHAT? Is you crazy?!

HENRY

Just for a second. Stay put. I'll
be right back.

EXT. BARN - MOMENTS LATER

Henry slinks up to the dilapidated barn and peers inside. He hears GROWLING beside him and turns to see a MASSIVE PIT-BULL, ready to pounce.

HENRY

CRAP!

Henry flails back as the dog's jaw snaps inches from him. The canine has been stymied by a chain around its neck.

INT. RUN-DOWN BARN - CONTINUOUS

The door CREAKS OPEN and Henry pokes his head in -

HENRY

Hello?

CONTINUED:

Pitch black until Henry's lighter emits a tiny flame, illuminating small patches of the abyss. A bail of hay. A SPOTLIGHT on a LIGHT STAND. He switches on the SPOTLIGHT and reveals--

An OLD LEATHERBOUND JOURNAL lying on a table-top. Henry flips through it to the first page -

"IF FO ND, I'M PRO ABL SCRE ED. PL AS ETURN TO 234 R NSOM LANE NE ORL ANS LOU I ANA. T ANKS A T N."

Henry catches a reflection in the window and spins to see-

A MASSIVE JUNK CONTRAPTION. At least 15 feet long. Made of assorted pieces of junk - scrap wood, tires, foam.

HENRY (CONT'D)
What the hell...

INT. PELE'S HOUSE - SIMULTANEOUS

Pele and Retard play a thrilling game of *Duck Hunt*.

RETARD
You think he's okay over there?

Suddenly Lalo dumps an ENTIRE JAR OF MAYONNAISE over Pele's head. Margarita chuckles in the background.

PELE
Jou... bastards.

INT. RUN-DOWN BARN

Henry sits by a barrel of CHEMICAL GOOP labeled 'Liquid Foam'. He positions the SPOTLIGHT so that it provides him with ample light.

As he handles the old journal, a NEWSPAPER CLIPPING falls out of a hidden pocket behind the cover. It's a CLASSIFIED AD for a lumber yard. He stuffs the CLIPPING back into the pocket and OPENS THE JOURNAL.

Smoke from his marijuana pipe lingers in the air.

Cursive writing on the page. 'SEPTEMBER 1st 1973...'

HENRY
(reading)
Set sail today. First time I've
said goodbye to land--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLD MAN'S VOICE (V.O.)
-- in ten long years...

SUPERIMPOSED IMAGES drift onscreen. AN OLD MAN with a white beard aboard a RICKETY RAFT. The waves take him away from the inviting Louisiana beach...

OLD MAN'S VOICE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
September 20th. Hernia's back. Had
to hang myself to stop the pain...

The Old Man hangs upside down on a platform as he drifts on the open sea.

Henry's eyes getting droopy...the weed burning...

OLD MAN'S VOICE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
January 2nd. I'm not the only one
starving out here...They came
again this morning...

Shark fins. Lots of them. Circling the water...

Henry nods off. His feet bump the table and knock the SPOTLIGHT silently onto a bail of hay. After a moment, a tiny WISP OF SMOKE RISES UP.

OLD MAN'S VOICE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
A storm...bad one...the devil is
coming. He'll take me...

Monstrous dark rain clouds swirl above the delirious old man. A GREAT BLACK WAVE barrels straight for him.

OLD MAN

INT. KITCHEN - LATER

PELE
AHHHOWWW! BE GENTLE PUTO!!!

Retard washes the mayonnaise from Pele's Latin mane.

RETARD

They look outside to see the BARN is engulfed in flames.

RETARD (CONT'D)
MOTHER OF SHIT!

EXT. GRAVEL ROAD - NIGHT

The Girl notices the flames from the barn licking the night sky. A look of dread washes over her.

EXT. RUN-DOWN BARN

Retard and Pele race to the barn. Henry, covered in soot, attempts to unleash the barking pit-bull.

HENRY
That thing went up like a
firecracker!

Suddenly Henry sees THE GIRL attempting to enter the burning structure. He grabs her.

THE GIRL
GET OFF ME! AHAB, ATTACK!!!

RETARD
WHO THE HELL'S AHAB?!?

The Girl unbuckles the pit-bull's leash and the JUMBO HOUND flies at Retard.

RETARD (CONT'D)
JESUS FUCK!!!

Henry tries to hold onto the Girl. She bites. And kicks. Suddenly, her eyes lock on the JOURNAL in Henry's hand.

THE GIRL
Oh my God. Where are the plans?!?

HENRY
What --

THE GIRL
The CONSTRUCTION PLANS?!?

Henry looks to the barn. His heart drops to his feet.

HENRY
In there.

Through the haze of black smoke, they spot The Sloppy Man stumbling out to the barn.

THE GIRL
Shit. You hafta get outta here.

HENRY
What? That's ridiculous!

CONTINUED:

THE GIRL
 I SAID. YOU NEED TO GET THE HELL
 OUTTA HERE! NOW!!!

RETARD
 C'mon Henry man...les jus' do like
 she says and vamoos.

THE GIRL
 Take the journal. If you lose it,
 I'll kill you.

HENRY
 But how do I get it back--

THE GIRL
 I'll find you. Now move!!!

EXT. HENRY'S HOUSE - PORCH - EVENING

Julia stands at Henry's porch cradling a crock pot. She rings the DOORBELL twice.

JULIA
 HELLO! Henry! I know you're there!

INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - FOYER - SIMULTANEOUS

Henry, his despondent face streaked with ash, crouches against the front door clutching the JOURNAL.

JULIA (O.S.)
 Well then I'll just have to leave
 this crock pot on the porch! I
 hope my famous rice pilaf doesn't
 go to waste!

We hear her leave it on the porch and trot away.

INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - OFFICE

Henry opens a mahogany desk drawer and pulls out a LONG SHEET OF PAPER. Selects a mechanical pencil.

FADE TO:**INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - OFFICE - DAWN**

Henry sleeps on the desk. CLICK. He props himself up to see THE GIRL pointing a FLARE GUN in his face.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE GIRL

What? You think yer the only dude
knows how to pick a lock, perv?

HENRY

I told you. I'm not a pervert.

THE GIRL

Just 'cause you shaved your
'stache don't mean you can fool
me. Now where's the journal?

HENRY

I - I left it on the banister.

The Girl backs up to the stairs behind her.

HENRY (CONT'D)

You know, there's no need for--

THE GIRL

You torched my barn, asshole!

HENRY

It was an accident.

THE GIRL

An accident?! You have any idea
how long it took me to build--

HENRY

-- your raft?

THE GIRL

So you read the journal?

She bumps into the banister. The journal tumbles to the floor.

The newspaper clipping and a PHOTO fall out of the HIDDEN POCKET. The Girl quickly snatches both of them up and stuffs them back in the journal.

HENRY

Why build a raft? Where are you
going with it?

THE GIRL

You really wanna know? Well,
guess what?

She throws the front door open. Flicks him off.

THE GIRL (CONT'D)

Suck on that.

EXT. HENRY'S HOUSE

The Girl rushes down the sidewalk. Henry follows.

HENRY
WAIT! ARE YOU GONNA START OVER?!

THE GIRL
I can't! Okay?!

HENRY
Why? Because you don't have these?

The Girl turns to see Henry holding up the sheet of paper. It's almost an exact copy of the RAFT BLUEPRINT.

HENRY (CONT'D)
This is just what I can remember.

The Girl can't help but betray a hint of awe.

THE GIRL
Well...yer still an asshole.

HENRY
But where are you planning on re-building it? You'll probably want somewhere private...and it's just, well my backyard is gigantic. This is my fault. Let me help you.

THE GIRL
I told you. I don't need yer help.

Henry tries to stop her, and The Girl pushes him away, revealing a FRESH BRUISE just below her neckline.

THE GIRL (CONT'D)
And I don't need yer pity either.

Thunder cracks in the sky. Rain pours down...

INT. SHITTY HOME - THE GIRL'S ROOM

The Girl, soaking wet, enters her room to find that her Ocean pictures have been torn off the wall. The Man sits on her bed. The Girl eyes a suitcase next to him.

THE GIRL
What's that for?

THE MAN
The fuck you think? Get packed.
We're moving.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Man stumbles out of the room. The Girl picks up one of her BEAUTIFUL PICTURES of the Ocean, RIPPED IN HALF.

A tear fills her eye. Ahab nudges her.

THE GIRL
Yeah... I know (sniffle) Fuck 'im.

INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - ENTRYWAY

Henry opens the front door to see The Girl, suitcase in hand. Ahab beside her.

THE GIRL
Okay. But nobody bothers me.
Nobody. And jus' remember - I
ain't doin' this 'cause I like
you. I'm doin' it 'cause Ahab and
me got no choice. And if it turns
out yer a perv, I'll beat yer ass.
Got it?

HENRY
Yes.

THE GIRL
Promise?

HENRY
Promise.

THE GIRL
You swear too?

Henry can't help but crack a subtle smile.

HENRY
I swear too.

And she turns, trudges off...

FADE TO BLACK.

THE GIRL (V.O.)
If every story started at the
very, very beginning instead of
some other place, Henry's story
technically woulda began on March
23rd, 1947. That's the day Thor
Heyerdahl started his 4,300 mile
journey from South America to the
Tuamoto Islands on a raft made a'
balsawood and scrap.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STOCK FOOTAGE of an aged Nordic man surrounded by cheering Island natives of dubious ethnicity.

THE GIRL (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 He arrived half a year later,
 completing the first Atlantic
 crossing and proving that Ancient
 South Americans coulda populated
 Polynesia. His most famous quote?

EXT. OCEAN - SUNSET

Thor on a HUGE, PRIMITIVE RAFT in the middle of the ocean, his arms around his 8-YEAR OLD SON.

THOR
 Remember son - progress is man's
 ability to complicate simplicity.

SON
 Can I pee now?

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

A much older Thor on an operating table, his head sewn shut. His body cold and still.

THE GIRL (V.O.)
 He died of a brain tumor thirty
 years later.

A DOCTOR pulls a sheet over the body, revealing Thor's crying SON standing to the side, much older.

THE GIRL (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 His raft was called the Kon-Tiki.

CUT TO:

INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN

Julia slurps tomato soup. She eyes Henry, unshaven, wearing a dirty t-shirt and sweat pants. He stares out the window, thoroughly disinterested in his company.

JULIA
 So... Have you - have you thought
 more about where you'd like to, um
 - spread her ashes?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HENRY

I really - I've been kind of -
busy lately... Mrs. Combs.

JULIA

Mom. You can still call me Mom.

I'd prefer it.

(beat)

You don't want to wait too long to
deal with a thing like that. And
it was Cindy's last wish, so...

Julia puts down her spoon.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Henry? Have you been taking drugs?

HENRY

What?

JULIA

It's just - I've been calling and
calling. And the way you look.
And you keep staring out that
window - and well, you don't seem
like you're...coping successfully.

Julia tries to take his hand, but Henry shrinks away.

HENRY

I told you. I'm just busy.

JULIA

There's a time for being busy.
This is our time for grieving.
What could be more important than
that?

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

A PHOTOGRAPH OF THE GIRL slides across a desk. An OLD COP picks it up and examines it.

THE MAN sits across from him.

THE MAN

She ran away 'bout three days ago.
All her information's on the back
of the picture, so just, y'know.
Take care of 'er. If you find 'er.

The Old Cop searches in a file cabinet behind him.

CONTINUED:

OLD COP
We'll need to have you fill out a
missing person's report...

He turns around to see that The Man is no longer there.

RETARD (V.O.)
Ay man...she shown up yet?

INT. RETARD'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Retard sits on a couch in his BVDs, glued to the phone.

RETARD
Yer kiddin'. That's three days
now. You think she was lyin'?

INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN

Henry - still looking out the kitchen window.

HENRY
(into the phone)
I hope not...

RETARD (V.O.)
Well, listen, I gotta put my Pops
ta bed. I'll see ya tomorrow?

INT. RETARD'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Retard hangs up and turns to his FATHER, sitting next to him. He is old and partially paralyzed from a stroke.

RETARD'S DAD
That one of your dickweed buddies?

With a sigh, Retard hoists him up, lugs him off to bed.

INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN

Henry's eyes get droopy as he tries to stay awake.

Squeak...Squeeeak... He jumps at the sound.

EXT. BACKYARD - NIGHT

Henry steps outside, a groggy smile on his face.

CONTINUED:

HENRY

Hey! I thought you weren't--

Ahab flies outta nowhere, barking wildly. Henry slams the door closed.

THE GIRL (O.S.)

No botherin' me! You swore!

HENRY

(through the window)

Okay. Okay. But what did you bring the dog for?!

THE GIRL (O.S.)

Insurance.

EXT. BACKYARD - LATER

The Girl flings a tarp over her JUNK PILE. She wheels her now-empty cart to the gate and shuts it behind her.

THE GIRL

Stay Ahab.

INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Henry eyes the pile of junk in the middle of his yard and the bony pooch standing guard. And he gets an idea.

INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

He opens Julia's CROCK-POT full of RICE-PILAF and mixes in a healthy amount of RETARD'S MARIJUANA.

EXT. BACKYARD - MOMENTS LATER

A bowl of rice pilaf shoots out the back door.

Ahab trots up. Gives it a tentative sniff. Chows down.

MOMENTS LATER -

Ahab snores up a storm as Henry's shadow creeps by him...

EXT. BACKYARD - NIGHT

The moon does a slow arc in the night sky.

CONTINUED:

The Girl wheels up to see that Ahab is out cold.

INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - BACK ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

BAM! BAM! Pause. BAM! BAM! BAM! Henry opens the door.

THE GIRL

You fucked with my stuff.
Didn'tcha?!

HENRY

I don't know what you're talking
about.

THE GIRL

Why the hell's Ahab asleep then?

HENRY

Ahab must be tired.

THE GIRL

My white ass...

She shoves him aside and slips into the house.

HENRY

What are you doing?

THE GIRL

Lookin' fer evidence.

Henry's eyes dart nervously to the kitchen sink.

THE GIRL (CONT'D)

BINGO MOTHERFUCKER!

HENRY

What?

THE GIRL

Your eyes darted!

HENRY

My eyes never dart.

THE GIRL

Nope. I saw 'em dart. You're
sweatin' something over...here...

She notices the subtle change on Henry's face when she runs her hands over the crock pot.

THE GIRL (CONT'D)

What the hell's in here?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HENRY

In there? Just some rice pilaf. I
ate some tonight. Is that a crime?

THE GIRL

My God. Yer the most pathetic liar
I ever seen.

HENRY

I don't lie.

THE GIRL

That a fact jack? I'll have some
then.

The Girl dips a spoon into the pot--

HENRY

NO! Don't!

Henry snatches the spoon, chomps down the pilaf himself.

HENRY (CONT'D)

(swallowing)
See? I told you. Nothing.

The Girl digs up another mound of pilaf.

THE GIRL

More.

HENRY

Come on...

THE GIRL

Dude...either you're eatin' the
rest a' this shit or I am.

INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Henry, eyes getting groggier by the minute, shovels
another mouthful of pilaf.

HENRY

Can I ask you a question? (swallow)
What do... you have against me?

She scoops another spoonful of pilaf and hands it over.

THE GIRL

Nothin' I don't have against nobody
else.

CONTINUED:

HENRY
Thas a non-answer.

THE GIRL
What the hell's a 'non-answer?'

HENRY
Wouldn'tchu like to know....

THE GIRL
You wanna real answer? Fine. I
don' trust you. You burned down my
life's work.

HENRY
That wasan... accident. Wanna know
what I think? Ithink girl like
you... nobody'sever really helped
you...so you can't trust anybody.

THE GIRL
Thanks Dr. Phil.

HENRY
Ya don'tbelieve me?

THE GIRL
I think yer pretty much nuts.

HENRY
Psh...says tha girl who's buildin'
a raf' outta garbage.

THE GIRL
...says the tool who has a dozen
crock-pots in the fridge and can't
work his own weed pipe.

HENRY
I'll haveyou know I've now
mastered tha weed pipe.

Henry opens his mouth for another scoop of pilaf.

HENRY (CONT'D)
Seeeeeriously. Whattareya plannin'
ta do with that thing?

THE GIRL
Seriously. Why you give a shit?

HENRY
'Cause...yer not a raccoon.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

THE GIRL

What the hell's 'you're not a
raccoon' s'posed ta mean?

HENRY

Doesn' matter...pointis...I like
helping withstuff...I'm good at
it...

THE GIRL

Psh. Says you.

HENRY

Okay...lemme ask yathis - I assume
yer plannin' on usin'...the design
in that journal...right?

THE GIRL

So?

HENRY

So...wha' happened... to the guy
who wrote the journal?

Uncomfortable silence from The Girl.

HENRY (CONT'D)

'Sides - even ifyoudo get a
sturdier design... you'd
haftaleave before storm sea-
season - which gives you just
over a month to build (burp)
thisthing. Which I'd say is
unlikely... scenario con...
considering your...speed.

THE GIRL

How you know all this?

HENRY

Because... I do.

THE GIRL

Thas a non-answer ain't it?

HENRY

You're... aquick...learner.

THUD! She looks up to see that Henry has slid off his chair and is now lying on the floor, unconscious.

THE GIRL

Mister? Mister?

She kicks him lightly. Henry just snores away.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

THE GIRL (CONT'D)
Sheeit...

INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM

The Girl takes a pillow off of the bed. A blanket.

She spies the UNMADE LAUNDRY still sitting on the bed. Then her eyes drift to a stack of LIBRARY BOOKS with names like *TRADEWINDS AND YOU*, *THE ZEN OF CIRCUMNAVIGATION*, *THOR HEYERDAHL'S KON-TIKI ADVENTURE*.

INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

She covers Henry with the blanket. Then slides the pillow gently underneath his head.

HENRY
Thanks...

MILLIE
Don' mention it.

HENRY
...and sorryfor...lyingabout
thepilaf...

THE GIRL
That's awright. Got some good
advice out of it anyhow...

HENRY
...seeyoutomorrow--

THE GIRL
Mildred. Thas my name. But it's
fer shit, so you can call me
Millie. But don' go gettin' any
ideas. I still think yer kind of
an a-hole.

Millie leaves and Henry's drugged smile grows wider...

HENRY
Seeya...Millie.

FADE TO BLACK:

MILLIE (V.O.)
William Willis was born in 1920. A
good 40-somethin' years before
Henry was even a tadpole in his
Dad's pecker.

INT. MODEST HOME - DAY

WILLIAM WILLIS (mid-30s) in horn-rimmed glasses sits with his fingers against his temples and his eyes closed. He emits a low, monotone hum.

MILLIE (V.O.)

By 1954, William had become an average plumber in Leavittown, New York....an average plumber who believed he could communicate telepathically with his wife.

CUT TO William's wife - let's call her DOTTY - sitting across from him. Eyes shut. Trying to receive the signal.

INT. LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Willis lounges on his sofa, inhaling a Microwave Dinner.

MILLIE (V.O.)

Legend has it that one day his average life was spun right around when he caught a documentary on the Kon-Tiki expedition after a Perry Mason rerun.

THOR (O.S.)

Progress is man's ability to complicate simplicity!

WILLIAM WILLIS

Whoa.

EXT. PERUVIAN BEACH - DAY

MILLIE (V.O.)

Couple years later, Willis set sail on his own handmade raft. Just an average dude on a lonely journey. Goin' out to look death in the eye...

Willis waves goodbye to Dotty as he sets out on a crude raft - helped along by a gang of Peruvian peasants.

EXT. OPEN SEA - VARIOUS

MILLIE (V.O.)

He battled the heat...

CONTINUED:

Willis lies in the center of his raft, baking in the sun.

CUT TO:

MILLIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
...starvation...

A rail-thin Willis picks through his rations. All he has left is flour. He devours a handful.

CUT TO:

MILLIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
...and sharks.

Willis digs a LARGE TOOTH out of his forearm. He faints as blood pulses out of the wound.

CUT TO:

MILLIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Finally, he became the first dude
to cross the Pacific on a scrap
raft.

Upon finally spotting land, a half-dead Willis closes his eyes. Puts his fingers to his temples.

MILLIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
His most famous quote?

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Dotty is washing the dishes when she suddenly shuts her eyes and becomes perfectly still. She laughs warmly.

MILLIE (V.O.)
Well, only one person in the world
knows the answer to that one...

EXT. GRAVEYARD - DUSK

MILLIE (V.O.)
...and she was run over by a bus
two years later.

Rain pours down. Willis places something in his wife's coffin as it disappears into the muddy ground...

THE SHARK'S TOOTH. It is buried with her.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW ORLEANS - DAWN

The sun's reflection ripples across the grimey ocean water...leading us up to a RICKETY OLD DOCK.

Where Millie sleeps soundly under a rotted and collapsed WOODEN AWNING. Suddenly Ahab licks her face, waking her.

MILLIE

What-- what?!

OUTSIDE - A FAT COP prowls the dock, rounding up VAGRANTS. Millie keeps her head down.

AKIO (V.O.)

The whole team is happy you're coming back, Henry.

INT. AKIO'S PALATIAL OFFICE - MORNING

Akio sips some of his finest Sake.

HENRY

Um...actually...I'm going to need some more time off Mr. Suzuki.

AKIO

Trouble handling your grief?

HENRY

Actually, I'm doing quite well.

AKIO

Ah. So you've gotten another offer. Whatever they're paying you, I'll double it. Fuck it, Daddy can play hardball. I'll quadruple it.

HENRY

It's - actually not another offer. I'm just working on something... different right now.

AKIO

'Different'? Like a hobby? A project?

HENRY

Different like a raft.

Confused silence from Akio.

CONTINUED:

HENRY (CONT'D)
Y'know...that floats.

AKIO
Why?

HENRY
Well...a boat can sink. Rafts can be broken apart, but they'll always float. And you know me - once I get started on these things I can't stop. Plus the whole scrap thing is intriguing.

AKIO
'Scrap' thing?

HENRY
We're building it out of scraps. Garbage. Junk. Retard can't make heads or tails of it, but I think it's a rather exciting challenge.

AKIO
Re - Retard?

HENRY
Great dude. Wizard with spackle.

Akio looks at Henry like he's from another planet.

AKIO
There's an old Japanese saying.
'When the noble carp has lost his hatchling to the ocean, his grief mustn't distract him from sea-life, lest he perish in the tide.'

HENRY
I thought I was like the goldfish.

AKIO
What I am trying to say, Henry, is that you must deal with your grief and get back to living in the real world lest you sink to the bottom of life's cruel ocean.

HENRY
But I told you...rafts can't sink.

EXT. CAR LOT - LATER

A sign reads 'BIG EASY USED VEHICULARS AND ASSORTED OVERSIZED EQUIPMENT'. A small BLACK MAN with James Brown hair examines Henry's Mercedes.

JAMES BROWN

We ain't never had no luxury big-dick vehiculars. We'd have nothin' to trade you for it.

Henry grins.

HENRY

I don't want another luxury car.

EXT. HENRY'S HOUSE - DAY

A HUMONGOUS OLD GARBAGE TRUCK rumbles up the driveway.

Retard and Pele poke their heads outside to see Henry at the wheel.

HENRY

I TRADED IT FOR THE MERCEDES!
C'MON! GET IN!

RETARD

WHAT ABOUT THE RENOVATION?

HENRY

SCREW IT! I'LL PAY TIME AND A HALF!

PELE

For time and half, I do anything.

EXT. GARBAGE TRUCK - DUSK

Millie sifts through a pile of rubble in front of a COLLAPSED HOUSE when she hears the rumble of the garbage truck engine and looks behind her.

HENRY

Wanna ride?

MILLIE

Not really.

HENRY

Okay. But you're missing out...

CONTINUED:

MILLIE

On what?

HENRY

You have to see for yourself. It's
amazing.

MILLIE

C'mon. Jus' tell me.

HENRY

You getting in? Or not?

INT. GARBAGE TRUCK - LATER

The Garbage Truck crests a hill to reveal a GIANT LANDFILL poised on the edge of the ocean.

Looks like the end of the world.

EXT. LANDFILL

Henry hops out of the Garbage Truck, spreads his wings.

HENRY

TA-DAAA!

MILLIE

We s'posed to admire the sunset or somethin'?

HENRY

No. We're supposed to shop.

MILLIE

Shop?

HENRY

You hafta get that raft in the water before storm season right? And what eats up most of your time?

(before she answers)

Gathering all that junk. So I thought I'd help you get all your garbage shopping done in one fail swoop. I even made a list.

He hands her a shopping list, she eyes it suspiciously.

EXT. LANDFILL - EVENING

Millie and Retard sift through mounds of garbage. Picking out plastic, wood...anything usable.

MILLIE
So how smartchu think he is?
Really?

RETARD
Henry? I think he's 'bout as smart as they come. But you already knew that. Didn'tcha?

Millie looks to Henry, LAUGHING in the distance, throwing a can to Ahab, who runs out to fetch it.

MILLIE
I guess. It's jus' - nobody's ever given two shits 'bout what I do. An' he's so nice and...happy helping me. It jus' seems weird.

RETARD
Well, weird ain't all bad sometimes.

MILLIE
But right after his wife...
y'know...

RETARD
How you know about that?

MILLIE
What?

RETARD
That Cindy's dead.

MILLIE
I just kinda figured.

RETARD
Well...I just think Henry's dealin' with crap in his own way right now. That's all.

MILLIE
So what was she like? His wife.

RETARD
Hard to say. I ain't had much contact with her.
(MORE)

CONTINUED:

RETARD (CONT'D)
 But I guess she was a lot like
 you. Kind of a - hurricane - type
 person.

MILLIE
 Whatchu mean, a 'hurricane type
 person'?

RETARD
 Well...you ever hear how they met?
 He got bit by a rattlesnake in
 Utah while he was birdwatchin'...

EXT. CANYON - FANTASY

Cindy, dressed in a hiking outfit and sporting pink hair comes upon Henry - writhing on the ground.

RETARD (V.O.)
 I hear she found 'im in a canyon
 and had to canoe through rapids n'
 shit to get to a hospital...

Henry holds onto Cindy for dear life as their canoe shoots down a small waterfall.

RETARD (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Andja know what she says to 'im on
 the way down?

CINDY/RETARD
 I'd suck the poison outta your
 leg, but it's only our first date.

EXT. LANDFILL - EVENING

MILLIE
 She sounds kinda crazy.

RETARD
 Uh-huh. Jus' like a hurricane. You
 woulda liked her.

He winks at Millie. She smiles.

MILLIE
 So why they call you Retard?

RETARD
 My Daddy made it up.

MILLIE
 Why's that?

CONTINUED:

RETARD

He's accomplished a lot. Fought fer
the Navy n' junk. Guess he thinks
I'm kinda good for nothin'...

MILLIE

You think he's right?

RETARD

Most stuff I done in life ain't
worth a thimble-full a' pig shit.
So... maybe.

MILLIE

Well... he sounds kinda like a
dick to me. Fer what it's worth.

RETARD

But he's my Daddy. I couldn't
choose 'im. Know what I mean?

MILLIE

Yeah. I kinda do.

HENRY (O.S.)

HEY! HEY! OVER HERE!!! QUICK!!!

EXT. RICKETY OCEAN PIER - MOMENTS LATER

Pele, Retard, and Millie rush up to the edge of a half-demolished ocean pier. Henry stares out at the water.

HENRY

You guys see it? Out there!

Millie's eyes wander to the ocean. She spots something floating in the waves. Several THINGS to be exact.

RETARD

Whas the big fuss?

HENRY

Any good raft starts with a strong
frame. It's the foundation of the
design.

Retard follows Millie's eyes to a couple of twenty-foot WOODEN POLES that have been swept away from the sea wall.

RETARD

What the hell's out there?

CONTINUED:

HENRY

Wooden poles. Strong ones. They'll make a sturdy frame.

RETARD

Do we jus' wait 'til the tide washes 'em in?

HENRY

They've already drifted out too far. Do we have any rope?

RETARD

In the truck.

HENRY

If we could loop it around the poles, I bet all three of us could pull them in no problem.

RETARD

How we gonna get a rope out there?

Millie takes off her Casio watch. Hands it to Henry.

MILLIE

Hold this.

And she takes a LEAPING DIVE into the cold water. Ahab follows suit.

PELE

OH SHIT MANS!!!

HENRY

WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING?!

MILLIE

I'M GETTING US OUR DAMN POLES!!!

Millie nudges Ahab and they both paddle out to sea.

RETARD

Somebody's gotta do somethin'!

HENRY

Let's get that rope.

EXT. PIER - MOMENTS LATER

Henry ties an intricate knot, making a LARGE LOOP at the end of the thick rope.

CONTINUED:

HENRY

Back up.

He spins the lasso throws it out to Millie.

She loops it around both of the poles.

MILLIE

PUUUULLLL!!!

Henry Retard and Pele pull the rope with all their might.

MILLIE - hugs the Poles as they're dragged to the pier.

PELE - his eyes popping out of his head with the strain.

THE POLES - approach the pier and are slowly but surely pulled up.

AHAB - inches up the length of the slippery poles.
Millie comes up behind him, pushing his butt up.

RETARD

I'M SLLLLIIIIIPPPING!!!

Ahab hops onto the pier right as--

-- Retard's foot slips out from under him. The rope BURNS through Henry and Pele's hands.

Millie SCREAMS as the POLES slam into the water and she lands underneath them. Henry rushes to the edge of the dock. No sign of Millie, then -- she pops up on the surface, coughing.

HENRY

HURRY! GET HER UP!!!

With all their might, they heave on the rope.

EXT. LANDFILL - DUSK

Henry covers the shivering Millie with a towel.

HENRY

Why the hell did you do that? Huh?

MILLIE

I w- wasn't just gonna l- let 'em get away. You said we needed 'em.

RETARD

We need to get 'er home quick.

CONTINUED:

MILLIE

NO! No. I - I - can't go. Can't
go h - home.

HENRY

Don't be ridiculous.

MILLIE

I s-said, NO! I c-can't go home!
(looking to Henry)
P- Please Henry. I c-can't.

Henry looks to Pele. Retard.

INT. HENRY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

ON HENRY'S BED - Millie examines the laundry pile.

MILLIE

So...W- Why don' I j- just wear
some-a th- this stuff?

HENRY

NO! No. That stuff is dirty.
Besides I think I found something.**INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

MILLIE (O.S.)

(inside the bathroom)
I l- look like shit.

HENRY

I'm sure it's not that bad.

Millie slowly opens the door and walks out wearing a
oversized LITTLE LEAGUE OUTFIT. She looks in the mirror.

MILLIE

I d- do look like shit.

HENRY

That was my tee-ball uniform when
I was a kid. I was the catcher.

MILLIE

You were the catcher in tee ball?

HENRY

I was too afraid of getting hit to
play any other position.

CONTINUED:

MILLIE

Anybody ever tell you that yer a
special kinda weirdo?

HENRY

Has anybody ever told you to quit
while you're ahead?

(beat)

Not that it's any of my
business...but how long has it
been since you ran away from home?

MILLIE

I dunno whatch're talkin' about.

HENRY

You've worn the same outfit for
the past week. And Ahab is
practically starving to death.

MILLIE

Four days. And it ain' my home.

HENRY

Is your father looking for you?

MILLIE

Psh. He's my Uncle. And he's gone.
Moved away. Now, you got a blanket
to go with all those questions?

Henry rummages through the closet.

HENRY (O.S.)

So where have you been sleeping?

MILLIE

Wherever I want.

Henry brings out a blanket and hands it to her.

HENRY

And I suppose you want to sleep
here tonight.

MILLIE

Just 'til my clothes dry.

HENRY

My dryer stinks. Might be a while.
You want the floor or the couch?

MILLIE

Neither.

EXT. BACKYARD - NIGHT

Millie fashions a makeshift bed for herself using Henry's blanket and the tarp.

HENRY

This is absurd. You'll freeze.

MILLIE

Look, if yer gonna bitch about it,
I can sleep somewhere else.

EXT. BACKYARD - NIGHT

Ahab whines against the cold. Millie shivers. She hears a slight tapping sound.

She looks up to Henry's bedroom window. A crude sign - marker on notebook paper - is against the glass.

FORGOT TO TELL YOU - I HAVE HOT CHOCOLATE

Millie can't help but chuckle at the sentiment.

MILLIE

Stupid...

Then - another sign goes up --

WITH MARSHMALLOWS!!!

There's that smile again...

INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - LATER

Henry picks the marshmallows from an old box of 'LUCKY CHARMS' and plops them in a couple mugs of hot chocolate.

HENRY

Sorry. Only marshmallows I have.

MILLIE

'salright. I dig Lucky Charms.

Silence as they both sip on their hot chocolate. Then--

MILLIE (CONT'D)

The Azores.

HENRY

Come again?

CONTINUED:

MILLIE

That's where I'm headed. On the
raft.

HENRY

You mean...on the other side of
the Atlantic? Those Azores?

MILLIE

Tell anyone and I'll hunt you
down. Promise you'll keep it
secret?

HENRY

Okay, okay. I promise.

MILLIE

You swear too?

HENRY

Yes. I swear too.

INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - BEDROOM

Henry lies on the floor. Millie and Ahab lie in the bed.

HENRY

But...why so far?

MILLIE

Jesus. Why not?

HENRY

You're fifteen years old.

MILLIE

Amelia Earhart was only a few
years older when she first flew.
And flyin' is a lot harder than
floatin'.

HENRY

She died.

MILLIE

So?

HENRY

You can die.

MILLIE

I don't think about crap like that.

CONTINUED:

HENRY

Well... Don't you think about
being - alone. For so long?

MILLIE

Yeah.

HENRY

And it doesn't scare you?

MILLIE

Why? It scare you? Being alone?

Momentary silence from Henry.

HENRY

Why not Cuba or Puerto Rico? Or
New Jersey?

Millie removes her necklace, tosses it to Henry.

MILLIE

Thas why.

Henry gingerly opens the small locket to reveal a picture
of a STUNNING WHITE BEACH bordered by HIGH GREEN CLIFFS.

MILLIE (CONT'D)

Ain't you ever wanted ta' escape
to the other side of the world?
Ain'tchu ever wondered what a
sunset looks like on a beach like
that?

HENRY

Someone used to try to get me to
go to places like this. But there
was always something else to deal
with here. Responsibilities.

MILLIE

Well, thas some bullshit.

HENRY

What?

MILLIE

World ain't shorta free moments -
it's just shorta people with balls
enough to take advantage of 'em.

HENRY

Life isn't like that.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MILLIE

Yeah it is. You just gotta make it
that way.

Henry sighs, rolls the necklace in his hands.

HENRY

Where'd you get it? The necklace?

MILLIE

Don' matter. All that matters is
gettin' where I'm goin'. Now
g'night mister. And...well...

(deep breath)

Thanks. For...the Lucky Charms.
And all the other stuff.

Millie turns off the lamp, Henry's smile still visible.

CUT TO:

INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - FOYER - MORNING

DING! DONG!

Henry opens the door to reveal Julia standing there.

INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN

Julia inspects the place. Henry follows her. By now, he is rocking a FULL-ON BEARD.

HENRY

Mrs. Combs?

JULIA

Mom.

HENRY

What - what are you doing?

JULIA

Frankly, I'm worried about your well-being, Henry. I stopped by your office to surprise you for lunch yesterday, and Akio told me that you've gone insane and taken up boating. That true?

HENRY

Well...rafting. Actually.

CONTINUED:

JULIA

Have you decided what you're going to do about spreading my daughter's ashes? Have you even given that a moment's consideration? It was her last request for God's sake!

HENRY

I know...I just - I haven't gotten around to it.

JULIA

Shoosh! Is that - Somebody's moving around upstairs!

INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - BEDROOM

Millie yawns and walks to the restroom.

INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN

Julia starts for the stairs, but Henry blocks her way.

HENRY

No! Don't go up there.

JULIA

Why not?

HENRY

I can't talk about this now. Can you just - please - come back another time?

JULIA

I'm sorry Henry, but we made a pact to help each other. You have a responsibility to your wife. To spread her ashes and to get well.

HENRY

I AM WELL! IN FACT, I'M HAPPY!

JULIA

How can you be happy?! Your wife just died! And I have a duty to her not to leave this house without a promise from you...that you will help me help you seek professional help.

More noises upstairs. Julia starts up. Henry blocks her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HENRY

Okay. Look. If I promise to...seek
help, will you please leave?

Julia considers.

INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM

We see Julia stepping into her lonely car. She catches a quick glimpse of Millie, peeking out the window.

Millie spins to see Henry entering the room.

HENRY

Don't worry - she's harmless.

Henry flops on the edge of the bed and stares at the pile of Cindy's laundry.

HENRY (CONT'D)

I think I'm happy. Building the raft. Helping you. I haven't been that way...for a while. Is anything wrong with that?

Millie shrugs.

HENRY (CONT'D)

You know what you said about -
escaping?

MILLIE

I was kinda sleepy. Don' pay any attention to it.

HENRY

It was true. There are always free moments. We just let other shit get in the way. We can always escape.

MILLIE

I dunno if thas the right word...

HENRY

Millie, listen. I want to go with you. On the raft.

MILLIE

You don' - you don' really mean that.

HENRY

I do.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MILLIE

Why wouldja wanna go with me? You
got so much here. This house...

HENRY

It's too big for one person.

MILLIE

Your job...

HENRY

Screw my job.

MILLIE

What about...y'know...all the
other stuff. You can't just leave
it all behind.

HENRY

Why the heck not?

He looks her in the eye.

HENRY (CONT'D)

You can't make it alone Millie.
Neither can I. Besides, I wanna
see it with you.

MILLIE

See what?

HENRY

The other side of the world.

Millie looks into his pleading eyes. Slowly, a subtle
grin spreads over her face.

CUT TO BLACK:

MILLIE (V.O.)

67% of deaths in the United States
happen when nobody's looking.
I read that somewhere once.

INT. HOSPITAL - CANCER UNIT - DAY

A FATHER (40s) shakes a vending machine while his YOUNG
DAUGHTER (4) watches on.

MILLIE (V.O.)

Story goes that David Pearlman was
gettin' a Clark Bar for his
daughter when his wife died...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A WEARY DOCTOR steps out of one of the hospital rooms, throws a pitiful look to David.

MILLIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
...or maybe it was a Butterfinger.

EXT. BOAT - DAWN

MILLIE (V.O.)
David's daughter was also there
when he poured all her ashes into
the Gulf of Mexico.

David lets the wind carry his wife's ashes out to sea.

INT. MIDDLE-CLASS HOUSE - DAY

MILLIE (V.O.)
And the day he almos' drank
himself to death...

David is wheeled out on a stretcher by EMT's. His Daughter (5) huddled in a corner.

INT. STATION WAGON - DUSK

MILLIE (V.O.)
And she watched from the car the
day he struck a friendship with an
old hobo who just happened to dig
watchin' sunsets too.

David sits completely alone on the beach outside. An OLD HOBO sidles up next to him. REVEAL that the hobo is an elderly WILLIAM WILLIS.

WILLIAM WILLIS
You like the ocean mister?

INT. SHITTY HOUSE - DAY

MILLIE (V.O.)
She was sent to stay with her
Uncle the first time that he set
off across the ocean on a raft
made out of garbage and driftwood.

David's Daughter (6) is led into an old house by her UNCLE - clad in a wifebeater.

EXT. RICKETY PIER - MORNING

MILLIE (V.O.)
 However, she got to see him set
 sail the second time...

David's Daughter (7) cries as he pushes off in a SMALL RAFT made out of plankwood and foam.

INT. SHITTY HOUSE - MORNING

MILLIE (V.O.)
 ...and the last time.

CLOSE on a bearded David. He opens a SILVER LOCKET, and points to the PICTURE OF THE AZORES inside.

DAVID
 That's where I'll be. If you ever
 need to find me.

CUT TO David's Daughter (8), whom we now recognize as Millie. He slips the locket around her little neck.

DAVID (CONT'D)
 Just don't be afraid Millie.

MILLIE (V.O.)
 She wasn't there the night that her
 Dad met his match in the lonely
 South Atlantic. Nobody was.

EXT. SOUTH ATLANTIC - NIGHT

A horrible storm tears the raft apart. David watches in abject horror as a HUGE WAVE barrels toward him.

MILLIE (V.O.)
 Well...almost nobody.

Someone grabs David's wet hand - his WIFE. Beautiful and smiling. Like it's the first day of their lives together.

David goes to kiss her when - BAM! The HUGE WAVE crashes over them.

EXT. OCEAN - DAY

The scene from the beginning of our story - The Portuguese Tanker discovers the destroyed raft.

CONTINUED:

MILLIE (V.O.)
 She wasn't there to see her Daddy
 die. But it don't really matter.

INT. SHITTY HOUSE - EVENING

MILLIE (V.O.)
 Death ain't about the people who
 die any damn way...

Millie's Uncle opens a package. Inside is THE JOURNAL.

MILLIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 ...it's about the people who have
 the shit luck to go on living.

Millie peeks out from her room. Her eyes fix on the JOURNAL as we...

CUT TO:

EXT. BACKYARD - MORNING

TRACK UP THE RAFT'S PROW to reveal that the entire vessel is really starting to take shape.

Millie sits beside it, petting Ahab.

MILLIE
 Henry? Got a question for ya...

HENRY
 Shoot.

MILLIE
 Well...there's this thing that happens near the Delta. Where all that river water from the middle of the country comes down and hits the ocean. It's a few miles out. You know that place at all?

EXT. DRIVEWAY - MORNING

Henry and Retard sift through Garbage.

MILLIE
 The river water's grimy as shit with all that pesticide from all those farms...y'know...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HENRY
We're gonna need more wood.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - AFTERNOON

Millie struggles to keep up with Henry and Pele, who search through mountains of garbage in front of WRECKED BUILDINGS for some good wood.

MILLIE
And all that crody pesticide from the river is bad for the ocean 'cause once it mixes in, it sucks oxygen outta the salt water. And so those ocean fish...they drown underwater. Ain't that some shit?

EXT. BACKYARD - DUSK

Henry separates the wood from the pile.

MILLIE
So when you pass by that spot, you can see the fish...jumpin' in the air and skippin' on the surface trying to get the hell outta the ocean... y'know, 'cause they ain't got no oxygen. And I wanted to ask ya' if we can see that along the way on the raft. Kinda like a little detour. Whaddya think?

HENRY
Huh? What was that?

Millie realizes Henry hasn't heard a word she's said.

MILLIE
Forget it.

Henry turns to Retard, who is at the top of the raft.

HENRY
THIS WOOD IS JUNK. IT'S NO GOOD!

RETARD
I'm usin' it up here and it's workin' like a charm!!!

Suddenly his foot falls through the raft's wood flooring.

EXT. HENRY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The streetlights buzz.

HENRY (O.S.)
Why do you have to be so damn
obstinate?!

MILLIE (O.S.)
Don't use big words with me just
'cause you think I can't argue
with 'em. I build my raft the way
I wanna build it.

INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN

Millie feeds Ahab by throwing him pieces of broccoli.

HENRY
But I have enough money. I can buy
us some quality material.

MILLIE
No. That's cheatin'.

HENRY
You can't build this thing
entirely out of garbage and scrap.
It's insane!

MILLIE
If it's so insane, then why don't
you just go back to doin' whatever
it is you were doin' before you
started fixin' my wheels and
burnin' down my barn and givin' me
Lucky Charms. Ain't got no big
word answers for that, do ya'?

She storms out with Ahab, leaving Henry standing alone.

CUT TO:

INT. DOCTOR'S LOBBY - DAY

Julia sits in the lobby alone. A MOTHER sits across from
her, tending to her CHILD.

MOTHER
Are you here to see Dr. Melvin?

JULIA
No. My - son - is in there now.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MOTHER
Oh. Good for him.

INT. DOCTOR MELVIN'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

A short, balding Psychologist, DOCTOR MELVIN (50s) sits behind a mahogany desk. Henry sits across from him.

HENRY
So... Listen, I want to start out by saying that you might think I'm crazy. But I'm not. It's just - my mother-in-law, I'm doing this as a favor for her. I can just tell she's broken up over her daughter and--

DOCTOR MELVIN
You mean your wife.

HENRY
R - right. And I think her concerns about me are sweet, but frankly... misplaced.

DOCTOR MELVIN
I don't understand.

HENRY
I think she's the one who can't deal with her feelings. But I don't know how to help her. So I came here. But I'm quite well.

DOCTOR MELVIN
You already said that.

HENRY
Well - it's true.

DOCTOR MELVIN
I meant I don't understand why you believe I'd think you're crazy.

HENRY
I'm sure she told you about the raft.

DOCTOR MELVIN
And...

HENRY
C'mon - I know how it must sound.

CONTINUED:

DOCTOR MELVIN
How must it sound?

HENRY
Well, doesn't it sound a bit crazy
to you?

DOCTOR MELVIN
I never really considered that.

HENRY
You expect me to believe that?
Some guy starts building a raft to
sail to the Azores not two weeks
after his wife... It has to sound
completely nuts to a guy like you.

DOCTOR MELVIN
How so?

HENRY
You're a psychologist. Do the
math.

DOCTOR MELVIN
The math?

HENRY
Don't they train you for stuff
like this? Or at least give you
something to say?

DOCTOR MELVIN
Like what?

HENRY
Like - 'move on' or 'why the hell
are you building a raft when you
should be crying your guts out?!'

DOCTOR MELVIN
I'm not building the raft, Henry.
You are.

Henry looks dazed for a moment. He picks up his coat.

HENRY
I have to go now.

EXT. DOCTOR'S LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER

Henry storms out of the office, right past Julia.

CONTINUED:

JULIA
Henry! How did it go?

He bats her away and SLAM! Storms out the door.

INT. GARBAGE TRUCK - EVENING

Rain pours down in sheets. Henry stares at the lights dancing on the windshield, downing a bottle of whiskey.

INT./EXT. HENRY'S HOUSE - RENOVATED ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The pitter-patter of raindrops as they hit the tarp roof.

Henry sits on a pile of rubble holding THE ODD PACKAGE addressed to Cindy. He tears open the box to reveal a THICK, HEAVY ROLL OF MATERIAL with a card attached -

'ENJOY YOUR CUSTOM-MADE WALLPAPER MRS. HERTZEL!'

Henry unfurls the wallpaper to reveal a PRINT DESIGN featuring BLUE BUNNIES, COWS, AND OTHER CUTE ANIMALS.

It's clearly meant for a BABY'S ROOM.

Henry smiles bitterly, tears forming in his eyes.

HENRY
How must it sound? HOW MUST IT
SOUND?!!

He SLAMS the tube into one of the windows, SHATTERING IT.

INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - BEDROOM

Millie is awakened by the sound of another window pane exploding.

INT./EXT. HENRY'S HOUSE - RENOVATED ROOM

Henry uses the WALLPAPER TUBE to bat down the tarp. Rain pours into the room as he goes wild...

HENRY
YOUTHINK I'M CRAZY?! HUH?! HUH?!
YOU THINK - YOU THINK...

MILLIE (O.S.)
Henry? W - What happened?

CONTINUED:

HENRY

You - really - you really
think...I'm crazy? That all of
this is crazy?

MILLIE

Yeah.

She kneels down and puts her arm around him.

MILLIE (CONT'D)

But...I'm crazy too. So just...
quit cryin'. 'Cause you make me
wanna cry. And that's fer shit.

Henry collapses to the floor out of breath.

MILLIE (CONT'D)

Okay? Asshole?

They lie there for a moment, curled in a little ball.

Henry sniffles, wipes the snot from his nose.

HENRY

Okay... asshole.

Millie helps him up, when suddenly his eyes go wide.

HENRY (CONT'D)

Wait a...wait a minute...

Henry runs his hand against the wooden wall of the room.

HENRY (CONT'D)

Go to the garage. Get the pickaxe.

MILLIE

Wha- why?

EXT. BACKYARD - MORNING

Pele and Retard arrive behind the house to see a HUGE
PILE OF WOOD in front of the house. Henry smiles at them.

HENRY

I found the wood for the raft.

Millie and Henry tear out the WALLS and FLOOR of the half-renovated room.

RETARD

Jesus Dude. How much a' that
house you gonna take apart?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HENRY

As much as I have to. We don't have much time. Are you guys in?

RETARD

We're gonna need some more hands.

HENRY

How about it Pele - can you get us some more hands?

INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

One by one, every picture of Henry and Cindy is removed from the WALL.

Henry, Pele, and Retard lay into it, knocking it down with sledgehammers, axes, etc.

LALO AND JESUS have a ball as they aid in the demolition.

EXT. BACKYARD - AFTERNOON

Lalo and Jesus load the wood into a wheelbarrow with their small hands. Margarita watches over them.

MARGARITA (O.S.)

CAREFUL LALO! SPLINTERS!

Jesus hops on as Lalo pushes the wheel barrow over to--

THE RAFT -

Which looks considerably better as the new wood is nailed in over the frame by Retard.

INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Millie observes quietly from a doorway as --

Henry stuffs each picture of him and Cindy into the closet.

He sees the URN up on the closet shelf.

HENRY

(whispers)

Sorry...

MILLIE (O.S.)

What is that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He turns, surprised to see Millie standing there, tries to hide his red eyes.

HENRY

Oh.... n - nothing. Just an...
art...piece.

MILLIE

It's pretty. Make a good
figurehead for the prow.

HENRY

Nah... I don't think so.

MILLIE

C'mon. It's perfect!

She reaches for it, but he slams the door.

HENRY

No. Alright? It's staying here.

Retard peeks in the window, notices the tension in the air as Henry storms out of the room.

EXT. RAFT- DUSK

Henry and Retard chomp on Margarita's tamales as they pour liquid foam into the raft frame, making a pontoon.

Retard watches Millie haul wood. Ahab trots after her.

RETARD

Y'know - the whole time I known
that girl's dog, I barely seen 'im
eat yet. He'd sail right off the
edge a' the world with that girl.
And not 'cause it's good for him.
Not 'cause it makes him feel
better. He's doin' it 'cause it's
good for her. He ain't got none a'
those...whatcha call 'em...

(eyes Henry)

Ulterior motives. Y'know?

HENRY

What are you saying?

RETARD

I ain' saying nothin', dude. Jus'
makin' an observation is all.

CONTINUED:

HENRY

Y'know - I really don't appreciate
this guilt trip crap everyone's
been giving me.

RETARD

Whose givin' guilt trips?

Henry fiddles his wedding ring. Retard gets up.

RETARD (CONT'D)

I was jus' talkin' about the dog.

FADE TO:**INT. PELE'S HOUSE - BOYS' BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Pele puts Lalo and Jesus quietly to bed. Both of the boys are worn out from the day.

LALO

Papa?

PELE

Yes, my hard worker?

LALO

Is Uncle Henry loco?

PELE

No. He just sad.

JESUS

Why?

PELE

He lost his Cindy.

JESUS

Who is his Cindy?

PELE

Cindy es a lady he met long time ago...in the Amazon jungles...

EXT. AMAZON JUNGLE - FANTASY

PELE (V.O.)

People says Uncle Henry was on tour when he get kidnapped by gorillas.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Henry screams as he is whisked away on the back of a hairy ape.

JESUS (V.O.)
GORILLAS?!

PELE (V.O.)
Si, Gorillas. Then Cindy, she take a stale banana and throw it at the monkey. Knock him out.

WHAM! A banana flies like a bullet and slams into the Gorilla's head, knocking it out. Cindy flies out of a tree in an explorer's outfit and helps Henry to his feet.

PELE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And you know what she say to him?

JESUS (V.O.)
What?

PELE/CINDY (V.O.)
I heard this was a good place to pick up guys, but dios mio!

INT. PELE'S HOUSE - BOYS' BEDROOM

JESUS
Thas not true story, is it Papa?

PELE
Only Henry know for sure.

LALO
And the gorilla!

PELE
Si. And the gorilla. Now go to sleep. My little gorillas.

Behind him, Margarita passes by - smiles to herself as he kisses both of the laughing boys on the forehead.

INT. RETARD'S APARTMENT - CLOSET

Retard sifts through his FATHER'S CLOSET...some war MEDALS...then gets to some old pictures.

One of his Father, cradling a little bundle on the deck of a PT BOAT.

RETARD'S DAD (O.S.)
BOY! YOU JERKIN' OFF IN THERE?!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Retard finally gets to what he was looking for - a LARGE ARMY PARACHUTE.

HENRY (V.O.)
Hey. You still awake?

INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Henry lies on the floor, making revisions to the blueprint. Millie is on the bed, curled up next to Ahab.

MILLIE
No.

HENRY
Listen, I just - wanted to tell you sorry. For being caught up with myself the last few days. It's just, things have been stressful for me. Sorry.

MILLIE
Thas cool. I guess.

HENRY
I want you to know this is your show. And I want you to know that we'll see it.

MILLIE
See what?

HENRY
The drowning fish you were talking about the other day. We'll take the detour. I promise.

Millie's lips curl into a little smile.

HENRY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
ONE! TWO! THREE! PUUUULLLLL!

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

TRACK up the length of a LONG THICK ROPE tied around one of the WOODEN POLES. EVERYONE pulls with all their might.

Margarita guides it into a LARGE ROUND HOLE in the raft.

MARGARITA
Keep going! Es almost there!!!

Reveal that the POLE will serve as the MAST on the raft.

EXT. CAR LOT - AFTERNOON

Henry rolls up in his Garbage Truck. James Brown waves.

JAMES BROWN
You want that Mercedes back?

HENRY
Not exactly.

INT. TOW TRUCK - LATER

Millie sits on Henry's lap. They carefully back a LARGE TOW TRUCK into the backyard, destroying the small fence.

HENRY
Cut right! Cut right!

Too late. Millie SMASHES into the garage.

HENRY (CONT'D)
Eh. It was a crappy garage anyway.

CUT TO:

INT. 7-11 - NIGHT

Julia buys her 'groceries.' A bunch of TV DINNERS. The 7-11 Clerk notices her long face.

CLERK
Anything wrong ma'am?

JULIA
Lots.

INT. 7-11 - FRONT DOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Julia exits the store when she notices a MISSING PERSONS flyer stuck to the wall. It's a crappier version of the photo that Millie's Uncle turned in to the cops.

CUT TO:

EXT. BRIDGE - DAY

The RAFT sits on the trailer as the truck drives across a suspension bridge.

EXT. ABANDONED MARINA - LATER

Homeless folks look on as the TOW TRUCK backs the boat trailer into the murky water.

Pele and Retard on top of the raft. As soon as the BOAT TRAILER is underwater, they CUT some thick ropes.

PELE
OKAY!!! PULL FORWARD, BOSS!!!

Henry lays on the gas and the Truck pulls the Trailer out of the water. However, the raft floats, unmoving.

Retard throws his hands up in the air and hugs Pele.

FADE TO:

EXT. DOCK - NIGHT

The raft is tied to the dock, swaying with the lapping waves. Henry and Millie are perched on the edge of the dock, their feet on the raft deck. Retard sidles up.

RETARD
I think we're gonna call it a day.
Go play some Duck Hunt.

HENRY
You guys get home safe.

Retard hops into Pele's midsize truck. It rumbles away.

HENRY (CONT'D)
Feels like we should celebrate.

Millie pulls out Retard's weed pipe.

HENRY (CONT'D)
(grabbing it)
Gimme that.

MILLIE
So...you got anybody you gotta say goodbye to? Parents? Friends?

HENRY
No need. What about you?

MILLIE
Jus' Ahab.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HENRY

Ahab?

MILLIE

Leavin 'im with Retard. There
 ain't rations on the raft for
 three.

HENRY

You told Retard yet?

MILLIE

Sheeit. He's the one that offered.
 (beat)
 Hey Henry?

HENRY

Yeah?

MILLIE

I - wanted to say - well, I wanted
 to say that I'm sorry.

HENRY

Sorry? For what?

MILLIE

At the beginning...I didn't trust
 you much. I just - I guess I
 couldn't believe that someone'd
 wanna help me out. Especially a
 dude like you. Got so much shit
 goin' for ya'...nice house...good
 job...people who care about you...

Henry looks nervously out to the ocean.

MILLIE (CONT'D)

I kept tryin' to figure out why
 you'd get involved with someone
 like me. Thought maybe you were
 like, a perv, or you were hidin'
 from somethin' or maybe you were
 jus' sad about yer wife an' all...

HENRY

How - how did you --

MILLIE

Retard told me. I'm sorry.

HENRY

Oh.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MILLIE

Then you said you wanted to go with me, and I started thinkin' maybe you were doin' all this 'cause you like me. And nobody ever liked me before. So I wanted to ask you for real. Is that why yer doin' it? If it ain't, don' worry. I can take it. Just-I wanna know. Do you like me?

Henry guiltily looks into her eyes.

HENRY

Yeah kid. Yeah I do.

MILLIE

And that's why you wanna go? Honest?

Silent beat as Henry shields her from the wind.

HENRY

...of course.

MILLIE

Thas what I thought. You - you feel that?

HENRY

The wind?

MILLIE

No...it's all the blood...in my shoulders and my arms... is tingling. You don' feel it too?

HENRY

I don't think so...sorry.

MILLIE

Didja - didja feel it when you first met... her?

HENRY

Who?

MILLIE

Cindy.

Henry hesitates.

MILLIE (CONT'D)

Don' worry. I know about the canoe. And the snake bite.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Henry can't help but break into a little chuckle.

MILLIE (CONT'D)

What?

HENRY

You ever heard the one about the skydiving? Or the gorilla?

MILLIE

No.

HENRY

I'll have to tell them to you sometime. They're funny.

MILLIE

Wait...that snake bite thing. It's made-up?

HENRY

She used to tell those stories at parties. It was our little joke.

MILLIE

Then how'd you two really meet?

HENRY

Naw... you'll be bored.

MILLIE

C'mon. I wanna know! Really.

Henry looks into her anxious eyes.

HENRY

Alright.

(beat)

She fell, and I picked her up.

MILLIE

She fell?

HENRY

Off her bike.

MILLIE

And you picked her up?

HENRY

Rode with her to the hospital. I always hated the sound of ambulances. But that whole ride, I didn't even hear the siren.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

HENRY (CONT'D)

I didn't hear anything except her breathing. We got married three months later. And over the years, we had our problems. She'd get depressed. I'd get mad. But ambulance sirens never bothered me again.

MILLIE

How I know you ain' fuckin' with me?

Henry smiles.

HENRY

She had the doctor take a picture of us when she was laid up in the bed. She said that way if she got amnesia, she would remember me. She was kind of crazy like that.

MILLIE

...like a hurricane?

HENRY

Yeah. Just like a hurricane.

(hangs his head)

She used to keep the picture with her. In the jeep. But it's gone now.

MILLIE

So... did you?

HENRY

Did I what?

MILLIE

Get that feeling. When you met her?

HENRY

I... I can't remember anymore.

MILLIE

I think you did.

Henry gets a little choked up. Millie puts her little head on his shoulder.

MILLIE (CONT'D)

Henry?

HENRY

Yeah?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

MILLIE

I - I think I love you.

(beat)

I know - me and you - could never.
But I at least wanted to let you
know. Y'know?

HENRY

Yeah. I know.

MILLIE

Henry? You mind if we stay here?
Just a little longer.

HENRY

Sure.

And Henry holds her as she drifts off to sleep.

EXT. HENRY'S BACKYARD - DUSK

Julia stares at Henry's house with a mix of shock and terror. For the first time, we see that the ENTIRE BACK WALL of the supremely designed home has been GOUGED OUT.

JULIA

Dear. God.

FADE TO BLACK:

MILLIE (V.O.)

67% of deaths in the United States
happen when nobody's looking.

INT. JEEP - AFTERNOON

CINDY. Driving down the street, the sun passing over her BEAUTIFUL FACE.

A faded PHOTOGRAPH sits on the Jeep's dashboard. A much younger version of Henry and Cindy pose for the camera in a HOSPITAL BED.

She looks down to see her BABY KICKING inside her womb.

MILLIE (V.O.)

I know I read that somewhere once.

As she looks back up at the road, her eyes go WIDE and she SWERVES the car. It SLAMS into a LARGE TREE...

CONTINUED:

MILLIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Cindy Hertzel died in the shade of
a bloomin' Magnolia tree...

EXT. ROADSIDE - CONTINUOUS

On the SHATTERED DASH, the wind picks up the PICTURE and
sends it off into the wind as -

A fine trail of blood runs down Cindy's forehead...

MILLIE (V.O.)
Y'know how they say when you're
about to die, your whole life
flashes before your eyes? Well I
think that's a loada shit.

A SHADOW passes over her face. SOMEONE else is there...

MILLIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I think mos' people only have
enough time to remember like a few
moments. Cindy remembered this one
time she wrecked her bike...

MAGNOLIA LEAVES silhouetted against the sun FADE TO...

EXT. PARK - AFTERNOON

A MUCH YOUNGER CINDY lies on the ground next to her
wrecked bike, groaning in pain.

MILLIE (V.O.)
... and the nice man who watched
over her while the ambulance came.

A MUCH YOUNGER Henry rushes up and cradles her head - he
motions for someone to call an Ambulance.

INT. AMBULANCE - LATER

MILLIE (V.O.)
She remembered how tight he'd
squeeze her hand when she was in
trouble. Even on that first day.

Their HANDS CLASPED as the ambulance jostles.

INT. WEDDING CHAPEL - AFTERNOON

MILLIE (V.O.)
Always fixin' things...

Cindy in a wedding dress. A tear drops from her eye. Henry tenderly wipes it away.

EXT. HENRY'S HOUSE - MORNING

MILLIE (V.O.)
Always trying to make her life
better...

THE HOUSE being built. Henry spreads his wings, 'TA-DAA!'

INT. JEEP - DAY

MILLIE (V.O.)
And when she crashed into that big
bloomin' Magnolia tree...

Cindy looks up and SWERVES. Barely missing SOMEONE crossing the street...

MILLIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
...when the sunshine was draining
from her body and those moments
were flashin' behind her eyes...

EXT. ROADSIDE - DAY

MILLIE (V.O.)
...one last thought passed through
Cindy's mind.

Cindy's surprised expression turns into a peaceful smile as she looks to the heavens.

CINDY
Watch...over him.

People crowd around, ambulance sirens wail in the distance and Cindy takes her last breath as we...

FADE TO:

INT. TOW TRUCK - NIGHT

Henry pulls up into his driveway to see JULIA'S CAR. The sleeping Millie stirs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HENRY
Ssssh. Wait here...

INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

BAM! Julia slams the MISSING PERSONS FLYER down on the table.

Duke tries to hide his discomfort and surprise.

JULIA
Who is she Henry?!

HENRY
I'm helping her. With the raft.

JULIA
STILL WITH THE RAFT?!

Julia tries to calm herself.

JULIA (CONT'D)
You're out of control. I'm taking you to a hospital.

HENRY
What do you mean 'you're taking me to a hospital'? Get this - you are not my mother. You're not even my mother-in-law anymore. So I'd appreciate it if you'd just get the fuck out of my house.

JULIA
And you get this. I've got the police station on speed dial. And they'll be very interested to hear about the littlest runaway sleeping in your truck, mister. I'd rather not, but I will if you don't pack your things and come with me. Right now.

(putting her hand on his shoulder)

No matter how far you go on some raft, she'll still be with you Henry. You've got to say goodbye.

Henry stares at the flyer. He's stuck.

HENRY
How - how long would I have to stay there? At the hospital?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIA
A week. That's all I ask.

HENRY
And after, you'll leave me alone.
Even if you do think I'm crazy?

JULIA
Even if I think you're nuts.

HENRY
Alright. I'll go pack.

He trudges up the stairs into his room. Julia waits until he's upstairs, then presses the speed dial on her cell.

JULIA
(whispering)
Dr. Melvin?... No, I feel
horrible... I know, a little tough
love never hurt anyone, but--

VROOOM! An engine fires up OUTSIDE.

Julia dashes to the front door, flings it open to see-

EXT. DRIVEWAY

Henry in the Truck. One of the UPSTAIRS WINDOWS open...

INT. TOW TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Henry pounds on the gas, slamming the Truck into her Volvo. The momentum sends the little car through the GARAGE DOOR, and the entire Garage collapses on it.

Millie jolts awake.

MILLIE
Holy shit!

EXT. HENRY'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Julia stares at her demolished Volvo, jaw dropped, as the Tow Truck speeds off down the street.

HENRY (O.S.)
I'LL PAY YOU BAAAAAAAaaaaack...

INT. RETARD'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Retard swings his door open to reveal Millie and Henry, shivering on the porch.

HENRY

It's time.

INT. TOW TRUCK - LATER

The Truck is parked at the dock. Millie writes in her journal as outside...

EXT. DOCK - CONTINUOUS

Retard and Henry load food onto the raft. A RAIN STORM swirls around them.

HENRY

We'll launch once this storm
clears up!

RETARD

If ya' don't mind my askin' dude -
what's the hurry?!

HENRY

(can't hear)
What was that?!

RETARD

WHAT ARE YOU RUNNING FROM?

Henry glares at him.

HENRY

I better go check on Millie.

INT. TOW TRUCK - MOMENTS LATER

Millie inside the truck, sleeping soundly, the journal still in her hands. Henry takes the Journal and puts it in the backseat. Millie stirs.

HENRY

Hey kiddo.

MILLIE

(groggy)
Hey. That was... really stupid
what you did tonight.

CONTINUED:

HENRY
Yeah... I know.

He takes his jacket off and puts it over her. He tucks it in around the outline of her little body.

HENRY (CONT'D)
But it doesn't matter. Nothing else matters now. We'll be gone soon.

Suddenly, he hears SNIFFLING. Millie is crying.

HENRY (CONT'D)
Millie? Are you - are you crying?

MILLIE
(sniffle) No. (sniffle) Kinda.

HENRY
What's wrong? Are you scared?

MILLIE
It's just (sniffle) Nobody's ever done this for me, before.

HENRY
Help you sail a raft?

MILLIE
Tucked me in.

Henry chuckles. Strokes her little head.

HENRY
Well, now they have.

FADE TO:

EXT. ROAD - MORNING

The sun crests the horizon. Storm clouds part.

INT. POLICE CAR - CONTINUOUS

A FAT COP drives by the dock and notices the TOW TRUCK. He gets on his CB.

FAT COP
Hey - didn't we have somebody call in a report on some used tow truck?

EXT. DOCK - MORNING

Seagulls squawk in the frozen dawn air as--

Retard helps Millie onto the raft. She grins as it bobs up and down. Henry hesitates in stepping on the raft.

RETARD

What's wrong?

HENRY

Nothing. I'm just... a little --

RETARD

Scared?

Millie smiles warmly and puts her hand out.

MILLIE

Don't be.

Henry is about to take her hand when--

HENRY

Shit.

MILLIE

What?

HENRY

Wait here. I'll just be a sec.

Henry runs off to the TRUCK.

RETARD

(to Millie)

We forget somethin'?

INT. TOW TRUCK - MOMENTS LATER

Henry rummages through the back seat and comes up with the JOURNAL.

He is about to run out of the truck when the NEWSPAPER CLIPPING falls out of the HIDDEN POCKET again.

He picks it up and that's when he notices on the other side of the Classifieds -

- is a NEWSPAPER ARTICLE. About CINDY'S ACCIDENT. The smile disappears from his face.

HENRY

What the...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He looks down and sees more papers poking out of the HIDDEN POCKET in the journal.

Including what looks like an OLD PHOTO.

EXT. DOCK - MOMENTS LATER

Millie is getting anxious. She looks down the road to see that a COP CAR is coming their way.

MILLIE
Shit. Where is he?

Millie hears rustling behind her and spins to see Henry, an angry look on his face.

MILLIE (CONT'D)
C'mon Henry. We gotta move!

But Henry stops. Doesn't go any further.

MILLIE (CONT'D)
Wha - what's wrong? LET'S GO!

HENRY
Who are you?

MILLIE
C'mon. Quit playin' games.

HENRY
Who the hell are you?!

That's when Millie sees what he's holding. The NEWS ARTICLES. They fall from his hand...

MILLIE
Listen Henry - I can -

HENRY
Where did you get this?

Henry pulls the PICTURE out of the journal and we see for the first time that it is the PHOTO OF A YOUNG HENRY AND CINDY from the Jeep.

MILLIE
I - I --

HENRY
HOW DID YOU KNOW MY WIFE YOU
LITTLE SHIT?!

Millie starts tearing up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MILLIE

I thought you said none of it
matters now. What does it matter
now? Please...let's just go.

HENRY

BULLSHIT! THIS HAS ALL BEEN A
BUNCH. OF. BULLSHIT!!!

He rips up the picture with a cathartic fury. He starts
ripping up the journal as well.

COP (O.S.)
STOP RIGHT THERE SIR!

Henry spins to see the Cop standing right behind him.
Millie DUCKS DOWN on the raft.

COP (CONT'D)
I don' know what in the hell is
going on here, but I got a call in
on that two truck, and-

HENRY
Go away.

COP
Excuse me?

Retard steps up.

RETARD
What - what he meant to say was--

HENRY
GO. AWAY. NOW. ASSHOLE.

COP
Fine? You wanna play that game?

He grabs Henry by the arm.

HENRY
GET OFF ME!!!

Henry struggles. The Cop wrestles him into a headlock.

ON THE RAFT -

Millie sees her chance. She quietly pulls the cord on
the raft's motor and --

VRROOOOOOMMM!!!

The raft churns up sea water.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

COP
What the--

Henry, Retard, and the Cop turn to see Millie sawing through the rope that ties the raft to the dock.

HENRY
Millie! WAIT!

MILLIE
(yelling over engine)
SCREW YOU!!!

And the rope SNAPS. The entire raft JOLTS FORWARD. The MAST SETTING pivots as the WHEEL jerks to the right and--

HENRY
WATCH OUT!!!

-- BAM!

The Mast swings from the side and slams into her head, knocking her forcefully INTO THE WATER.

A little CLOUD OF RED spreads from her head...

ON THE DOCK -

Henry watches, horrified.

HENRY (CONT'D)
Oh God.

He dives into the ocean, swimming desperately.

Retard and Pele watch helplessly from the dock as...

IN THE OCEAN -

Millie's limp body bobs up and down, face submerged in the cold water.

And further out, the PILOTLESS RAFT putters in circles.

MILLIE (V.O.)
Henry Hertzel heard about his
wife's death at exactly 4:56 pm
Central Standard Time.

FADE TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - FLASHBACK

Henry walks into a hospital room to find Julia inside, Cindy's bed is empty.

MILLIE (V.O.)
And when he walked into that
Hospital Room and Cindy wasn't
there...he didn't even cry.

He walks slowly to the bed.

MILLIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
All he could think to do was to
make her bed.

FADE TO:

EXT. DOCK - DUSK

Henry carries Millie out of the water, her face pale, her head dripping blood.

MILLIE (V.O.)
See, Cindy never made her bed. Or
did her laundry. Cause she always
knew Henry'd do it for her. 'Cause
he liked takin' care of her. And
he'd do it better anyway. She was
funny like that...

FADE TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - FLASHBACK

Henry sits at the edge of Cindy's made hospital bed, staring at the wall.

MILLIE (V.O.)
It's funny how, when people are in
trouble, they'll sometimes go back
to those places they knew. Those
things that made 'em comfortable.
Like makin' somebody's bed...

INT. AMBULANCE - LATER

Millie, unconscious, an oxygen mask over her face.

MILLIE (V.O.)
...or watchin' over somebody...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Henry holds her small hand...squeezing it tightly...

FADE TO:

INT. JEEP - FLASHBACK

Cindy looks up and SWERVES her car. We finally catch a glimpse of what she was trying to avoid - someone pushing a FAMILIAR JUNK-LADEN CART across the street.

MILLIE (V.O.)
It's funny how a little flash of,
like, recognition can help
somebody...

EXT. ROADSIDE - FLASHBACK

Reveal that the Someone standing over the dying Cindy is actually Millie. Sobbing helplessly.

MILLIE (V.O.)
Like things we've done before...

Zoom into Cindy's eyes, which flash with recognition.

EXT. HENRY'S HOUSE - FLASHBACK

MILLIE (V.O.)
...or people we've seen around.

A HEALTHY CINDY takes out the trash and notices MILLIE and HER CART across the street.

EXT. ROADSIDE - FLASHBACK

Cindy smiles subtly at a sobbing Millie.

CINDY
Watch...over him.

Millie nods as People crowd around.

FADE TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Henry watches the doctors wheel Millie down the hallway.

CONTINUED:

MILLIE (V.O.)
 And it's funny how as much as we
 try to get away from those little
 moments...

FADE TO:

EXT. ROADSIDE - FLASHBACK

Millie runs from the scene of the accident when she notices SOMETHING on the ground. She picks it up.

MILLIE (V.O.)
 ...those little places and
 memories and instincts...they keep
 comin' back for us. Like sharks
 circlin' their prey. And we can
 never get away...no matter how
 hard we try.

In Millie's hand. It's the OLD PHOTO of Henry and Cindy.

FADE TO BLACK:

MILLIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Henry Hertzel found out about his
 wife's death at 4:56 pm. He made
 her bed for the last time at 5:32.
 He never could remember the last
 time he squeezed her hand.

FADE UP:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Henry's hand wrapped around Millie's limp little paw.

Sunlight streams through the hospital windows, falling upon her. Bruised. Unconscious. Hooked to a gang of machines that beep and pump without rhyme or reason.

HENRY
 Hey kiddo...

Slowly but surely her bruised eyes flutter open.

HENRY (CONT'D)
 You...you look...

MILLIE
 (raspy)
 ...like...shit...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He laughs and tries to stifle his tears.

HENRY

You don't...you don't deserve
this...any of it... I'm so sorry.
(sniffling)
I don't know what happened...I'm
just...I'm so scared...and I don't
know what to do...I swear...

MILLIE

It's...okay...

HENRY

Were - you there? When she...

Millie nods and softly brings his hand up to her cheek.

HENRY (CONT'D)

You know...when you said that you
had that feeling - on the dock -
your blood tingling? Where - where
did you feel it?

Millie slowly takes his hand and moves to her shoulder.

HENRY (CONT'D)

Where - where else?

And then to her neck.

HENRY (CONT'D)

And - and what about here?

He moves her hand to his stomach.

Millie smiles. Nods.

HENRY (CONT'D)

Yeah...me too.

And he puts his head down next to hers.

She then softly brings her OTHER HAND over and puts
SOMETHING in his. THE LOCKET. She motions to it...

HENRY (CONT'D)

No. I can't do it...not
alone...not alone...please...

MILLIE

You'll...see...see...

HENRY

I'll see what?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MILLIE
...you'll see...

And she drifts peacefully out of consciousness...

Henry looks down at their intertwined hands. Bobbing up and down on her softly breathing stomach...

As if lost in some vast ocean.

FADE TO:

INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM

Retard stands in Henry's doorway, head lowered.

RETARD
You gonna be alright? Henry?

Henry sits on the edge of his bed, lost in his sadness.

INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - LATER

Henry cleans frantically, throwing the rest of the crock pots away.

Scrubbing the grime off of the cabinets.

Cleaning out the CLOSET. He leaves the URN inside.

INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - LATER

He stares at the pile of UNFOLDED LAUNDRY on the bed.

Everything else is clean. This is the only thing left.

He takes a deep breath, and forces himself to start folding.

FIRST HER SHIRTS...

...THEN HER SOCKS...

...HER PANTIES...

...A PINK SCARF...

...AN ORANGE SHIRT...

...SOME GREEN MITTENS...

...THE PILE DWINDLES.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The last item of unfolded clothing. A PAIR OF JEANS.

He slowly folds them in half.

Then halfway again.

And sets them on top of the STACK of CINDY'S NEWLY FOLDED LAUNDRY to reveal--

-- A FAMILIAR NOTE scrawled in thick marker. Lying on the bed. It's been under the pile the whole time. Henry nervously picks it up and forces himself to read...

I'M ALWAYS LOVING YOU.

A bittersweet smile washes over Henry's face as he softly puts his arms around the clothes, drawing them close as if they will bring her back to him...

FADE TO:

EXT. HENRY'S HOUSE

An orange glow as the evening ushers in a new dawn.

INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM

The morning sunlight hits THE SILVER NECKLACE, hanging on Henry's bedside lamp. The reflected light shines in Henry's face, waking him.

His eyes open to see the limitless horizon outside his window. He sits up, looks around, takes a deep breath...

...then grabs the necklace.

EXT. RETARD'S APARTMENT

Retard swings his door open to reveal a RAGGED Henry.

HENRY
I need your help.

Retard looks to his Father sitting behind him.

RETARD
You talk to Pele yet?

EXT. DOCK - DAY

The RAFT - beached and decrepit. It lies on its side, nearly upside down in the dirty sand.

HENRY (O.S.)
ONE! TWO! THREE! PUUUUULLL!!!

Track up a THICK ROPE to reveal Henry, Retard, Pele, Lalo, Jesus, and Margarita pulling with all their might.

Retard's Dad watches from the Truck as the Raft slowly turns over and rights itself. Everyone cheers as --

-- Henry raises the SAIL. It is covered with holes, but we recognize it as RETARD'S FATHER'S PARACHUTE.

RETARD'S DAD
You do that boy?

RETARD
Whaddya - whaddya think?

Retard's Dad mulls it over for a minute. Then pats his grinning son on the leg.

RETARD'S DAD
It's a damn fine vessel, Lawrence.

A lump forms in Retard's throat. Probably the first time he's heard his real name in 30 years.

RETARD
Thanks pop.

CRACK! Suddenly, the mast breaks in the middle, halfway falling down. Everyone jumps back.

RETARD'S DAD
Gonna need a new mast though.

INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Henry ties a THICK CHAIN around the house's CENTRAL BEAM. He runs his hands over the 'HENRY + CINDY' engraving.

INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - ENTRYWAY

Henry opens the closet and takes CINDY'S URN off its shelf.

EXT. HENRY'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

He walks out of the house, suitcase and Urn in hand, and waves at Pele in the Tow Truck.

HENRY

Ready!

The Tow Truck lurches foward, the thick chain pulls taugh.

ZOOM IN SLOWLY on the chain as it twists and stutters with tension...

MILLIE (V.O.)

Nobody ever knew why a dude like Henry Hertzel, with an average job and average clothes and average hair and no real experience in circumnavigation set out to be the first person to cross the South Atlantic on a scrap raft...

The tension in the chain finally lets up and we hear a LOUDER THAN LIFE CRASHING SOUND.

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE

Julia opens her door to reveal Henry on her front porch.

MILLIE (V.O.)

Some people say it's 'cause he went crazy...

Julia looks down at the Urn in Henry's hand.

JULIA

Where - where are you taking her?

Henry hands her the MAGAZINE with Cindy's drawing of the two STICK FIGURES on the BEAUTIFUL BEACH.

HENRY

The other side of the world.

Julia laughs through her tears at Cindy's drawing.

EXT. DOCK - DUSK

The TALL CENTRAL BEAM of Henry's house now serves as the RAFT'S MAST.

ON THE DOCK - Henry hands a piece of paper to Pele.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HENRY

It's deed to my land. You can
sell it, build on top of it,
whatever... it's yours now.

Pele shows the deed to Margarita, who grabs her husband and LAYS an OTHERWORLDLY KISS on him.

Henry moves on to Retard...who holds Ahab on a leash. Tears form in his eyes as he hands Henry Ahab's leash.

HENRY (CONT'D)

Retard. I can't--

RETARD

Now listen. You ain' payin' me no double time no more, which means I don' hafta sit here and reason with ya'. Just take the damn dog before I kick your ass. Okay?!

Retard hugs Henry with all his might.

RETARD (CONT'D)

I LOVE YOU FUCKNUT!

(beat)

And don' worry. We'll take care of her. You can count on that.

Henry smiles and nods at his friends for the last time.

MILLIE (V.O.)

It's damn hard to figure out why the hell people do what they do. I guess sometimes things just seem right...

EXT. OCEAN - EVENING

Henry motors out to sea on the Raft. Pele, Retard, Lalo, and Jesus become specks on the horizon as --

-- He switches off the motor and unfurls his SAIL to reveal that it has been patched with various items of clothing including some familiar MULTI-COLORED SOCKS, PANTIES, SHIRTS, and a PAIR OF WOMEN'S JEANS...

MILLIE (V.O.)

Henry was alone when the wind puffed up his sail for the first time and the horizon was endless...so I guess nobody can say for sure how he felt at that moment...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Henry looks to the horizon. It is indeed endless...

FADE TO BLACK.

MILLIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 In fact, all that's known of
 Henry's journey was found in an
 old leatherbound journal a couple
 months later...

EXT. TANKER - CONTINUOUS

A FISHERMAN peers over the side of his small boat.

MILLIE (V.O.)
 An old leatherbound journal fished
 from a broken raft...

INSERT - The Fisherman grabs the leather journal (wrapped in a Ziplock bag) from Henry's demolished, sinking raft.

INT. CAPTAIN'S CABIN - NIGHT

The FISHERMAN pours over the meticulously notated story contained in the journal.

FADE TO:

EXT. RAFT - MIDDLE OF OCEAN - DAY

The sun beats down on the raft as Henry steers, a shirt wrapped around his head, Ahab by his side - yapping.

MILLIE (V.O.)
 Folks say that the first leg of
 Henry's journey went according to
 plan...

We see what Ahab is barking at. Hundred of fish JUMPING and SKIPPING ON THE SURFACE of the ocean water.

MILLIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 ...with a few surprises along the
 way, a' course.

Henry smiles at the miraculous sight.

EXT. RAFT - DECK - MORNING

The deck is unmanned. A rope tied around the steering wheel keeps the raft on course.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MILLIE (V.O.)

But soon minutes were adding up to hours. And hours were adding up to days. And days to - well, you get the point. See, they say when you're at sea that long...strange things start happenin'.

INT. RAFT - CABIN

Ahab is skin and bones as Henry, bearded and sunburned, holds the Urn and searches through the food supply.

MILLIE (V.O.)

One minute everything's fine...

He cringes and pours GREEN GOOP out of a cereal box.

MILLIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

...and the next minute, even yer
Lucky Charms are fuckin' with ya.

Henry sifts through loads of food that have been ruined by the seawater.

EXT. RAFT - DECK - AFTERNOON

Henry tugs on a fishing line (piano wire) tied around the raft mast.

MILLIE (V.O.)

And instead of you tryin' to catch
the fish...

Suddenly, something pulls on the fishing line so hard that it drags Henry into the water.

MILLIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

...the damn fish try to catch you.

Henry, helpless in the ocean water, as his raft sails away from him.

THE URN on the deck, reflects sunlight in his eye, as if it is signaling him.

Shark fins break the water behind him.

HENRY

No...no...

He pulls himself back to the raft by the piano wire. It cuts into his finger to the bone along the way.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MILLIE (V.O.)
 ...and that's when you start
 seein' things.

EXT. RAFT - DECK - LATER

Henry climbs onto the raft looking like a drowning fish.

HENRY (V.O.)
 ...strange things.

From his POV on the ground, Henry sees a WOMAN'S FEET at the stern of the ship. He blinks and they are gone.

INT. RAFT - GALLEY - EVENING

MILLIE (V.O.)
 And by the twentieth day, you
 start thinkin' you're as corroded
 as yer water tanks.

Fresh water leaks slowly leaks out of a tiny corroded hole in one of the water tanks.

EXT. RAFT - DECK - NIGHT

The wind blows rain sideways, stinging Henry as he repairs the busted sail. One of the MULTICOLORED SOCKS blows away with the wind. Henry cries out.

MILLIE (V.O.)
 ...by the thirty-fifth day, yer
 mind is as sideways as that rain.

He catches a WOMAN'S BLOND HAIR blowing out of the corner of his eye. He blinks and it is gone.

INT. RAFT - CABIN - EVENING

Henry pours out the last of the water. Half for him, and half for Ahab.

MILLIE (V.O.)
 ...and by the fifty-seventh day,
 you start thinkin' your heart is
 as dead as that ocean that
 surrounds you...

EXT. RAFT - DECK

TRACK ACROSS the rotted deck of the raft.

MILLIE (V.O.)
 ...that it ain't pumpin' to give
 you life. It's pumpin' 'cause it
 always pumps. In and out...

The hole-ridden sail.

MILLIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 ...in and out...

The useless engine.

MILLIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 ...in and out.

Henry at the head of the raft, his feet dangling over the edge. Hugging the Urn and writing in the journal.

MILLIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Then, one day, you look up to the
 sky to see that one hell of a shit
 storm is comin' your way.

He finishes writing in the journal, wraps it in a Ziplock bag, and ties it to the raft as we...

Track around him to reveal GARGANTUAN GREY STORM CLOUDS ON THE HORIZON. Henry looks down at the Urn.

HENRY
 It's time.

CUT TO BLACK:

MILLIE (V.O.)
 Nobody was with Henry Hertzel the
 night that storm hit and his raft
 was destroyed.

EXT. RAFT - DECK

Ten foot waves pound the raft. Henry tries to open THE URN, but the raft is too shaky to disengage THE LOCK MECHANISM.

MILLIE (V.O.)
 Well...almost nobody.

Ahab barks at the wind when CRACK! Henry looks up to see that the MAST is coming straight down for him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He jumps out of the way, dropping the Urn.

KAWOMP!!! The mast cracks the raft in half. Henry screams as Ahab is washed away from him on the other half of the raft - along with the Urn.

HENRY (CONT'D)
NOOOO!!! PLEEEAAASSE!!!

But Ahab's frantic barks fade into the blackness. And with them, all hopes of honoring Cindy's final wish.

Henry puts his head in his hand, crying hopelessly...

HENRY (CONT'D)
I can't...I can't...do it...

A DELICATE HAND alights on Henry's face. Henry slowly pulls his head out of his hands and looks up to see--

CINDY. Shining like the first day of their lives together. She smiles and touches his cheek.

A GREAT BLACK WAVE HEADS FOR THE RAFT.

HENRY (CONT'D)
...I couldn't - I couldn't do
it...alone... I can't...

Cindy kisses Henry softly on the cheek. Whispers.

CINDY

THE WAVE'S SHADOW crosses over Henry's face. He brushes her hair back.

HENRY
Yes...I know.

CRASH! THE WAVE DEMOLISHES THE RAFT.

FADE TO BLACK.

MILLIE (V.O.)
67 percent of people die when
nobody's watching...

EXT. OCEAN - UNDERWATER - NIGHT

FLASHES OF LIGHTNING illuminate CHUNKS of raft debris sinking slowly into the black ocean depths.

Henry holds desperately onto CINDY as she sinks with the debris. He sinks with her, struggling to hold on to her hand. Struggling against the DARKNESS.

Then, Cindy smiles, her hair swirling in beautiful circles around her.

She looks to his hand holding hers. Her eyes pleading - 'LET ME GO.'

Henry closes his eyes. And he LETS GO OF HER HAND. Watches her sink into OBLIVION.

As he struggles with all his might back up to the surface, and we...

FADE UP:

EXT. AZORES BEACH - MORNING

The waves lap gently on a pristine white-sand beach we might recognize from MILLIE'S LOCKET.

MILLIE (V.O.)
What I never could find out is how
many people *survive* when nobody's
watching...

PULL OUT to reveal a haggard Henry, washed up on the beach. Missing a sneaker.

MILLIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
...but I guess they don't print
shit like that.

Henry looks up to see a panting Ahab sitting loyally beside him. Henry's magenta sneaker in his mouth.

MILLIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Nobody ever knew fer sure how
Henry Hertzler crossed the
treacherous South Atlantic on a
scrap raft.

EXT. PELE'S NEW HOUSE - DAY

Retard and Pele somberly work on PELE'S NEW HOUSE when Retard looks up to see someone walking toward him...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A POSTMAN.

MILLIE (V.O.)
 He never talked about it much
 after it was all done. But I think
 it was just what he was meant to
 do. Simple as that.

INT. PELE'S NEW HOUSE

Pele and Retard run through the NEWLY CONSTRUCTED HOME.
 Not too shabby. Lalo and Jesus play with Margarita.

MILLIE (V.O.)
 And you might say I'm fulla
 bullshit. And I just might be.

INT. PELE'S NEW HOUSE - SMALL BEDROOM

Millie lies on the floor, anxiously making revisions to a
 NEW RAFT PLAN and chewing on Lucky Charms. Retard and
 Pele hand her a POSTCARD.

MILLIE (V.O.)
 But if I know one thing for sure,
 it's that this is a true damn
 story.

INSERT - On the postcard is a picture of the BEAUTIFUL
 WHITE AZORE BEACH. On the back, in black marker --

SEE YOU SOMEDAY.

Millie smiles and sticks the postcard on her wall - where
 at least fifty other EXOTIC POSTCARDS are stuck.

EXT. AZORES BEACH - MORNING

A NATIVE KID plays in the white sand of the Azores beach
 when he notices something that has just washed up -

A shiny STEEL HERMETICALLY-SEALED URN. Looks like a
 priceless treasure from a distant planet.

MILLIE (V.O.)
 Every last friggin' word.

The Kid picks up the treasure and giggles, running to his
 village and showing it off to his friends as we...

FADE OUT.